



PAST MERIDIAN.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Here, at Earth's banquet, he's the wisest guest
Who gladly takes whate'er his God doth send,
Keeping each instrument of joy in tune
That giveth fitness for the choir of Heaven.

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PREFACE.

IT is not considered polite to ask people their age, after the bloom of youth has departed. I would not willingly violate the rules of decorum, or tempt any one to hide the foot-prints of Time, as the Indian warrior covers his track with leaves. Making no invidious inquiry, let me simply whisper in the ear of those who have achieved more than half life's journey, that this book is for them. It is their own exclusive property. It is devoted heart and hand to their interests. Whoever is found reading it, may be suspected to have attained the same ripe age.

It is, therefore, a kind of confidential affair between me and my compeers—we, whose faces are toward the setting sun. To all such, I offer the right hand of fellowship. We are in the same category—a joint stock concern that admits no young

partners. Every camp has its watch-word. Every state its history. Every profession its policy. And have not we ours? Aye, and our rights too? Shall we not stand for them? Come let us see.

L. H. S.

HARTFORD, CONN.

TO
GEORGE PEABODY, ESQ.,
OF LONDON,

To whom both the A. M's and P. M's

OF HIS NATIVE LAND

TURN WITH PRIDE AND PLEASURE,

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.



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CHAPTER I.

The A. M.'s and the P. M.'s.

“ Ah! what concerns it him whose way
Lies upward to the immortal dead,
That a few hairs are turning gray?
Or one more year of life hath fled?
Swift years! still teach us how to bear,
To feel, to act, with strength and skill,
To reason wisely, nobly dare,
Then speed your courses as ye will:
When life's meridian toils are done,
How calm, how rich the twilight glow,
The morning twilight of a sun
That shines not here on things below.”

PROFESSOR NORTON.

THE equinoctial of human life, though vaguely defined, is not an imaginary line. Arithmetically speaking, thirty-five, as predicated on the allotted span of seventy years, is the true

zenith. Yet life's latitude can not be computed with such exactness. Of Cuvier, it was said at sixty, that he was but in the climax of his scientific powers; and Klopstock, at eighty, bore the epithet of "the youth forever."

These instances are, indeed, but exceptions, and it must be, doubtless, admitted that the meridian of life is fully passed at fifty. It would be an exceedingly liberal construction to extend to sixty, the dividing line between the ante and the post-meridian people. Boundaries may diverge, here and there, but the characteristics and possessions of those on each side of this debatable ground are sufficiently distinct.

With the A. M.'s, are the beauty and the vigor, and the ambition of this present world. Of these distinctions they are aware and tenacious.

Yet, the P. M.'s are not utterly cyphers. This, I trust, in due time to show. If with them, there is a less inflated hope, there should be a more rational happiness; for they have winnowed the chaff from the wheat, and

tested both what is worth pursuing, and worth possessing.

Is there any antagonism between these parties? Is one disposed to monopolize, and the other to consider itself depreciated? Does one complain that

“Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage?”

and the other morosely withdraw from the battle of life, and its reciprocities? We will not admit any just ground for such estrangement. Rather are they differing tenses of the same verb, the verb “*to love*,” whose root is in the blessed principle that binds the universe together. Children are they of the morning and of the evening, living on the bounty of one common Father, and lighted by the beams of the same rising and setting sun, to His home in Heaven.

The duties that devolve on the P. M.'s are not often as clearly evident, or as strongly enforced as those which appertain to their predecessors. One comprise the planting, the other the garnering process. In agriculture, the

necessity of preparing the soil, and sowing right seed, is apparent and imperative. The requisitions to remove weeds, and destroy noxious insects, are equally obvious. But when the objects of culture approach their final maturity, vigilance declines. Still, the careful gardener will give the perfecting peach the shelter of a wall, or the clustering grape a prop, that it may better meet the sunbeam. The laborer knows that the golden sheaf needs the vertic sun, and the boy seeks not his nuts in the forest, till the frost opens their sheath.

So, in this our mortal life, though the toils that fit for action, are more obvious and pressing, yet the responsibilities of its period of repose, deserve frequent and distinct contemplation. For that richest fruit of the Creator, the soul of man, that which survives, when all other works of creation perish, goes on ripening and ripening as long as it hangs in this garden of time, and needs both earthly and divine aid to bring it happily to the eternal harvest.

It has been said that the ethics of age have been less elaborately stated than those of youth

or maturity. Still, the most perfect philosophy, the most sublime precepts, fail, without the example of a good life. The morality of Socrates and Seneca, was beautiful, but their times furnished no illustrations. The code of Confucius was fine, but lacked vitality. How much more impressive is the theory of Addison, he who was enabled to say at last, "Come see in what peace a Christian can die."

"I know of but one way of fortifying the mind against gloomy presages and terrors, and that is, by securing the friendship of that Being who disposes of all events, and governs futurity. He sees at one view, the whole thread of my existence, not only that part of it which I have already passed through, but that which runs forward into the depths of eternity. When I lie down to sleep, I recommend myself to His care; when I awake I give myself up to His direction. Amidst all the evils that threaten me, I will look up to Him for help, and question not but He will avert them, or turn them to my advantage. Though I know neither the time, nor the manner of the death that I am to die, I am not at all solicitous about it, because I am sure that he knows them both, and that He will not fail to support and comfort me under them."

A serenity thus founded and sustained, promotes the ripening of the soul's best fruits. Earthly perturbations check their full develop-

ment, and may cause them to fall before their time. To pass through God's world unreconciled, or in hostility to Him, is fearful arrogance. To estrange from His service the powers that He has given, or the affections that He claims, is treason heightened by ingratitude.

If this has been the case with any of us, let us lay aside the weapons of our warfare. When we first entered this pilgrimage, many paths allured us, each bright with flowers, and birds of hope. Some we followed, till the flowers faded and the song ceased. Others we entered, and hastily retraced, finding only thorns and pitfalls. Now, approaching the close of our probation, a single road strongly solicits us, one prominent object concentrates our desires, a happy entrance into the "house not made with hands!"

All along the way there is happiness for those whose hearts are in unison with the Divine will. With a prayer of penitence for the erring past, with a hymn of faith for the joyous future, they pass onward, their Christian graces maturing day by day, under the "clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness." Thus may it

be with us, until the last, bright drop of this brief existence shall be exhaled.

Those who have completed half a century, if not literally numbered among the aged, have yet reached a period of great gravity and importance. They should have gained an ascent which discloses much of earth's vanity. They have passed life's meridian, and journey henceforth toward the gates of the west. Those who like tutelary spirits presided over their earliest years, and rejoiced in their blossoming promise, have long since ceased those ministrations, or departed to their reward. For the responsibilities that remain, they must gird themselves, and help to gird others. To a future generation they should pay the debt which they have incurred from the past.

Time has also to them, a heightened and an increasing value. For should they reach three-score and ten, which it is computed that only five in one hundred of our race attain, or even far exceed the prescribed date of man, every year is said to gather fleetness as it approaches its goal. The rapidity of the tide of time has

been well depicted by one of our own eloquent lecturers, the Rev. Henry Giles.

“There is no Gibeon in life, upon which we can rest for a moment, the morning or the noontide; there is no Ajalon in our age, whereon we can force the moonlight to repose beyond its appointed hour. We can not rekindle the morning beams of childhood; we can not recall the noontide glory of youth; we can not bring back the perfect day of maturity; we can not fix the evening rays of age, in the shadowy horizon; but we can cherish that goodness which is the sweetness of childhood, the joy of youth, the strength of maturity, the honor of old age, and the bliss of saints.”

The aids of philosophy to promote the comfort and dignity of advancing age have been often given, in the form of beautiful rules, or striking aphorisms. Yet these will be found frail, or rootless, unless the soul is at peace with itself and with its Maker. “I can scarcely think that man in his right mind” said the eloquent Cicero, “who is destitute of religion.”

It may be, that God’s gift of life in its more protracted periods, is by certain classes of observers, undervalued, or vilified. Should it be our lot to reach any of those periods, may we do justice to the Giver’s goodness. May we so

coöperate with all heavenly influences, so conform our conduct to the precepts of the Gospel, so trust in our Redeemer, that

“What is dark
In us, He may illumine ; what is weak,
Raise and support.”

Thus, striving to prove that age, though deemed so unlovely, can be happy and holy, may we find the last note of its hymn sweetly harmonizing with the angels' welcome, “Come up hither !”

CHAPTER II.

Old.

“My Mariners!

Souls that have toil'd and wrought and felt with me,
That ever with a simple welcome took
The thunder or the sunshine, and oppos'd
Free hearts, free foreheads, you and I are *old*.
Yet age hath still his honor and his joy.”

TENNYSON.

OLD! Can you remember how you felt, when that adjective was first coupled with your name? Perhaps your milliner in fitting a new hat, chanced to remark, that was a “becoming fashion for an *old lady*;” or some coachman, by way of recommending his carriage, might have added, it was remarkably easy for an “*old gentleman* to get in and out of.”

Old, indeed! How officious and rude these common people are! Whereupon, you have

consulted your mirror, and been still more indignant at their stupidity.

But you may have been more gently helped along to this conclusion, by the circumstance of paternity. *Old Mr. and Mrs.*, set in apposition with *young Mr. and Mrs.*, lose much of their discordance, and become familiar household words. The satisfaction of hearing your eldest darling thus distinguished, has softened the bitterness of your own unflattering cognomen. Possibly, you have been moved magnanimously to exclaim, with the sententious Ossian, "Let the name of Morni be forgotten among the people, if they will only say, behold the father of Gaul."

Still, it is hard to have a quietus suddenly put upon long-cherished hopes and vanities. "The baby shall not be named after me," said a young parent of his first-born, "for it will be *old John* and *young John*, while I am yet in my prime." "I wish my son had not taken it into his head to marry so early," said a lady in a remarkably fine state of preservation; "for now, I suppose, it must be *old Madam*, and

young Madam." The unmarried, whose recollections can bisect a century, are prone to be annoyed at the disposition to pry into dates, and are sure that no well-bred person would be guilty of such absurd curiosity.

Yet, to veil the traces of time, and put family records out of the way, are of little avail. There will be here and there, a memory stubbornly tenacious of chronological matters, and whoever labors to conceal his proper date, will usually find some Argus ready to watch over and reveal it.

But, after all! what is there so frightful in this little Saxon word *old*? This collocation of three innocent letters, why do they thrill the hearts of so many fair women and brave men, with terror and aversion?

Is everything that is *old* deteriorated? What do you think of old wine? We can not, indeed, say quite as much about that, in these temperance times, as Anacreon did. But I've always understood, when physicians recommended its tonic or restorative powers in medicine, it was the *old*, and not the *new*. Ask the epicure to

partake of new cheese. Saith he not, "the *old* is better." Does any one question the correctness of his taste? What do you say of an *old friend*, that best cordial of life? Blessings on his smile, and on the hearty grasp of his hand. What if he does come, leaning on his staff? There is no winter in his heart. He was brought up in times when friendship was more than a name.

"The vine produces more grapes when it is young," says Bacon, "but better grapes for wine, when it is old, because its juices are more perfectly concocted." Very true, no doubt. A wise man, was my Lord Bacon. We see everything is not worse for being old.

Is it worth while to be so much shocked at the circumstance of becoming old? Is it a mark of excommunication from our race? On the contrary, we have a chance of finding some very good company.

So then, we to whom thrice twenty years, each with its four full seasons, fairly counted out, pressed together, and running over, have been given, will no longer resist the epithet,

old. "To this complexion we have come at last." We will not be ashamed of it. It is better to be old, than to be wicked.

Let us draw nearer together. I hold that we are not a despicable body. Similarity of position, gives community of interest. Have we not something to say, that others need not hear? We'll say it in this book.

And first, I would whisper a proposition, that we depend not too much on sympathy from the young. Those who earnestly demand that commodity, having outlived their early associates, will stand a chance of being numbered among the repiners of old, "sitting in the market-place, and calling unto their fellows, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented."

Secondly, let us search after bright things, in the world, and among its people. "Every year of my life," says Cecil, "I grow more convinced that it is wisest and best to fix our attention on the beautiful and the good, and dwell as little as possible on the dark and the base."

Yet it is said that the past-meridians are

prone to be querulous, dissatisfied, and dealers in complaints. I think I have heard a few of these. Supposing we should examine them

“*The world is not what it used to be.*” No. It is in a state of palpable progress. It has thrown off its seven-mile boots, and travels by steam. Those who plod after it in their antique, lumbering stage-coaches, fail to keep in sight the smoke of its engine. We can not overtake it, and it will not stay for us. The world is in a different phase of action. It pleads guilty to this accusation. What next?

“*We do not receive the respect that was once paid to age.*” Perhaps we expect too much. Is not something due *from* us? We think the young neglect us. Do we not owe something to the young ourselves? Those who linger at a banquet after others are gone, should take especial pains to make themselves agreeable. If we find less courtesy than we wish, let us show more. It becomes us to be very meek and patient, to make amends for our long entertainment at life’s board. “I had a beautiful dream,” said a bright boy. “I thought we

children were all in heaven, and so happy. By and by, grandfather came in frowning, and saying, as he always does, 'Can't these children stop their noise?' So we all ran away."

"*People are tired of us.*" It may be so. The guest who tarries late, is sometimes counted intrusive or burdensome. Toward those who have long retained coveted honors or emoluments, there is a natural impatience for reversion. "That old lawyer has stood first at the bar, long enough," says the younger aspirant. "That old physician gets all the practice; we young doctors may starve." "That old author has been the favorite of the public an unreasonable time; the rest of us want a fair chance." The monopoly of wealth is equally hazardous, though expectant heirs may be less frank in their expression of impatience.

The resignation at the departure of the aged and distinguished, can be readily understood. Allusions to the majority of the early summoned, may be sometimes significant. "Those whom the gods love, die young," said a pagan. In an age when all slow movements are

unpopular, speed in departure may possibly be counted among the graces ; and in a republic, a desire for the equalization of honors, is neither peculiar nor reprehensible.

“*We are not in good health.*” Very likely. It would be remarkable if we were. We could not expect to wear the world’s harness so many years, up hill, and down hill, without some chafing. It would be a wonder if none of our senses were enfeebled. They have served us a long time. Let us be thankful for the period in which we have seen clearly, heard quickly, and moved nimbly. Many mysterious springs, and intricate chords, and delicate humors, have been kept in order to this end. We will praise the Architect of such wonderful mechanism, that it has so well served us, and that He has seen fit so long to keep the “pitcher from being broken at the fountain, or the wheel at the cistern.”

“*Our early friends have departed,*” Ah ! there is sadness in that sound. But on this tenure we commenced our earthly journey. They were to go from us, or we from them.

We linger in the deserted hall, and ought not to marvel that its flowers droop, and its lamps wane, or are extinguished. Yet our blessed ones, lost for a time on earth, are they not to be found in heaven? Only a little in advance of us, have they forded the dark river. See we not their white garments glitter from the opposite shore? Does not their smile inspire us with courage ourselves to launch away? We go not to a stranger's land. Is not that glorious clime of our hope, endeared by the thought that so many of those whom we best loved here, await us there? that the hands which we here pressed so fondly, shall renew the love-ties, which death for a moment sundered? that those voices which have never ceased to linger in our hearts as a treasured melody, shall be the first to welcome us to the society of an "innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of the just made perfect?"

Whoever persists in complaining of this mortal life, virtually admits that he desires another. Are we ready for an untried existence? ready at a moment's warning to launch

away, and return no more ? ready for its atmosphere and service of love ?

If any preparation for this change of clime is incomplete, let us address ourselves fervently to the work, without loss of time or energy, in murmuring. We might, indeed, from loneliness and morbidness, multiply complaints without end. The habit might grow with indulgence, till every breath became a claim for sympathy, or an objurgation if it were withheld.

But *cui bono* ? Have not others infirmities and troubles as well as ourselves ? Why add to their load ? Would it not be better to take a part of theirs ? “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” It hath been well said that “murmuring is a black garment, and becometh none so ill as saints.”

Oh friends ! let us not lose our interest in life’s blessings, because we have so long enjoyed our share of them. Rather, as an eloquent writer of our own has said, will we “arise, and throw open a window in our hearts, and let in the tone of the bird, and the breath of the violet.” We will not permit that bright

heart-window to be sealed, nor the hand, through our own inertness, to become paralyzed, while genial nature still spreads her charms around us, and invites us to rejoice in them, and in the God who gave them.

CHAPTER III.

Reporters.

“Gather earth’s glory and bloom *within*,
That the soul may be brighter when youth is past.”

MRS. OSGOOD.

“THE senses,” says Lord Bacon, “are reporters to the mind.” No wonder that they should get wearied with taking evidence, when the case is kept before the court some three or fourscore years. It is only surprising that their declension should not be expected.

Various expedients have the ingenuity of man devised, to strengthen their weakness, or supply their loss. The spectacle-maker furnishes eyes, and the dentist teeth. The worshipful fraternity of wig-fanciers, cover bald temples with hair, to any desired pattern or hue. The crutch-vender, and the cork-worker, do their

best to aid diseased locomotion. The tiny, curving trumpet, promises to stir the dull tympanum.

Yet, can any human power revivify the defunct ear? If sound hath died in its mysterious temple, is there a resurrection, a second life? Among the senses, that of hearing is prone to be the most frequently impaired, and when lost, to awaken the least sympathy. The hand is involuntarily stretched to lead the blind, or to give a seat to the lame. But, at the approach of the deaf, there is a flight, or with those who remain a sense of labor. No long conversations can be anticipated, save with the long-suffering. Deafness, more than other infirmities, repels intercourse, and cuts the links that bind man to society.

Has our ear grown weary? It has heard many discords in its day, without a doubt. The nerves, its ambassadors, may need repose. It is true that we are thus prevented from rendering ourselves agreeable in society. But, perhaps, when we were there, we did not do or receive any great amount of good. Possibly,

our oral contributions to knowledge may not be much missed, and meditation may be as serviceable to us as the taking in of new supplies. It may be our true wisdom to withdraw from the traffic of words, and cultivate a more thorough acquaintance with our own hearts, and our hearts' true friends, the angels. Perchance we have lingered long enough among earth's broken tones, and are called to reserve our listening powers for the melodies of heaven.

The eye, that keeps so fresh our blessed communion with nature, has that become dim? Are those who "look out at the windows, darkened?" Must the world of books be in a great measure closed to us, or perhaps, the dear faces of friends shrouded? Then, the soul's pictures gather clearness, and memory walks in halls where is perpetual light. Thought concentrates itself, and makes its work more perfect. Should we have had the *Iliad* of Homer, or the greater poems of Milton, or the histories of Prescott, if the outer eye had not been "quench'd by drop serene," and the flashing of the world's torches and flambeaux shut out from

the mind's sanctuary? Hear the brave, blind
old poet,

“So much the rather, thou Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the soul thro' all her powers
Irradiate.”

Good and faithful servants have the reporting senses been to us. Year after year have they spread for us the charms of nature, and brought us the music of the living world, and the odor of the rose, and the thrill of the love-kiss, and the pleasure drawn from the essences of earth's fruits, and from that inferior creation which was yielded to man's dominion, that the nutriment of their life might sustain his own. If any of these sentinels at length slumber at their post, if they falter or decay, we will not view it as an infliction, or an affliction, but rather as a tranquilizing pause of preparation for a state where they are no longer needed. While we rejoice that they have for many years been continued to us, we will not forget to be thankful that we have ourselves also been spared for further improvement.

How many dangers have been overruled that we might be sheltered. What hosts of enemies have been trodden down that we might live. In how many nameless forms does death beset helpless infancy. From the cradle what an unending procession to the grave. The little hand falls powerless, the eye just learning to love the light, retires within its sealed fringes, the tongue that began to lisp the mother's name is mute, and she, with a sorrow that words have never told, is a weeper over a small, green mound, or, starting at midnight, stretches her empty arms in vain. Yet, from the foes that beset waking life, we have been saved.

The child at school, having surmounted the perils of earlier years, is considered comparatively safe. Who says there is safety at any age, if he has heard the funeral prayer by the pale clay so late full of vigor, and seen the school-mates move a mournful train, to the cold bed of the loved sharer in their studies and their sports.

Youth is forth, like the morning-sun, upon

the green hill-tops. Its cheek is bloom; its step, grace; its voice, melody. No care hath touched it, and kneeling love worships it as an idol. Rose there a voice upon the saddened air, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust!" All is over. Perchance, it was our bosom's friend. Yet we lived, and passed onward.

The father and mother are the center of a happy circle. All their powers are in requisition to protect, to guide, to foster the children whom God hath given them. They seem essential to their welfare, not only for the "life that now is, but for that which is to come." Their place is empty. Their voice is silent. To the home of their love they return no more, and the orphans go about the streets.

But, have we been permitted to see our nursery-plants grow up, and cast a fair shadow? Have we taken a blossom from their stem, a baby grandchild upon our knee, and felt its velvet fingers moving lovingly amid our silver hairs, and new life entering into our veins from its quickly beating heart, or merry laughter? And, was not this new affection as fond as that

of young paternity, as warm with fresh hope, and perchance even more pleasant, in being freed from an anxious burden of accountability?

Why should we ever forget to be thankful? Does the soldier, standing at his own quiet door, having left most of his comrades stark and stiff on fields of warfare, feel no gratitude? Does the sailor, whose companions sank with the wrecked ship, view with indifference the life-boat that rescued him from the whelming wave?

Behold, from the battle and the storm, we have been saved. Wherefore we are thus distinguished, it is not for us to say. Yet a weight of obligation rests on us, to render, in some proportion, according to the benefits we have received, and the risks from which we have been shielded.

Are we not in life's school, the highest class? the longest under training? and probably the first to be dismissed? How can we best prove that our tuition has not been in vain, that He who hath granted us such a protracted term of

fatherly discipline, may not pronounce us idle scholars, or profitless stewards of his abounding mercy? So faithfully served by his reporters, we should surely be able to present a good report at last.

Sometimes, in seasons of earnest supplication, we may have felt as if we could adopt the appeal of the endangered debtor, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all."

The Master hath had patience with us. How have we performed our part of the contract?

CHAPTER IV.

The Custody of Knowledge.

The old man sate in his elbow-chair,
His locks were thin and gray ;
Memory, that early friend, was there,
And he in querulous tones did say,
'Hast thou not lost, with careless key,
Something that I entrusted to thee ?'
Her tardy answer was sad and low,
'Alas, I fear that it may be so.'

KNOWLEDGE, in all ages of the civilized world, has been prized and coveted. The cloistered monk made it, of old, a substitute for life's warm charities, and the philosopher of modern times finds in it a more permanent distinction than rank or wealth can bestow. The pleasures of original thought, of deep research, of high converse with nature or art, are a rich reward for the perseverance they require. For

them, both contemplative and ambitious men have been content

“To scorn delights, and live laborious days.”

To the mind thus elevated, even the bliss of heaven is enhanced by the thought that there its aspirations will be freed from the barriers and obstacles that fettered them here below. A fair, young creature, to whom death had dealt the final stroke, pointed upward in ecstatic hope, and said, with her ebbing breath,

“There, boundless floods of knowledge roll,
And pour, and pour upon the soul.”

To *retain*, as well as to *amass* this precious treasure, is a point of immense importance. The “custodia,” or military guard of the ancient Romans, led chained to his left hand, the prisoner or captive committed to his charge. Of memory, we are wont to expect similar vigilance. The tendency of advanced age is to impair this custody. Whether the tendency is inevitable, or to be resisted, is an inquiry of serious import.

The venerable President Quincy, whose retentive powers, and mental elasticity, surmount the pressure of time, thus pleasantly alluded to this subject, in a speech on a public occasion in Boston, after he had numbered seventy years :

“To an old man, Memory is wont to be an arrant jilt, and is no way delicate in letting him know that, like the rest of her sex, she gives young men the preference.”

The fidelity of Memory is doubtless more entire for trusts committed to her in early life. She had then fewer objects to divide her attention, and more room in her casket to arrange her accumulated stores. She attaches a heightened value to what was gained with toil, so that the axioms and precepts which were deepened by education seldom escape her.

There are some who propose the use of written memoranda, as an expedient for mental retention. Yet, they serve rather to nourish the sloth of Memory, than to gird her for healthful action. Is it necessary that she should fail with years, unless the action of

disease impairs some of those organs through whose agency she has been accustomed to receive impressions?

The women of our aborigines were the keepers of the archives and legendary lore of their tribes. In extreme age, their powers of recollection have been observed to be permanent and vivid. I saw a female, of the Mohegan nation, who had numbered one hundred and seventeen years. The skin upon her face and hands was rigid and mottled as the bark of a tree, and from her eyes light had long departed. Yet, within, the lamp of memory clearly burned. She spoke of the state of her people, in the far-off days of her childhood, of the terror they felt at the powerful and savage Mohawks, of the lineaments of different chieftains who had borne sway, and of the spreading strength of the whites, who like a great oak-tree overshadowed them. She graphically narrated many circumstances of the visit of her brother, the Rev. Samson Occum, to England, of the kindness that was shown him there by the great and good, the presents that were made

him, and spoke especially of the books that he so proudly brought back to his native shores.

I had also a valued friend, who reached the age of a hundred, whose memory was not confined to the impressions of early years, but took sympathetic cognizance of passing events. An amiable temper kept awake his interest in all around, and prevented the hermetical sealing of what only concerned his own early and immediate sphere.

That infirmity of the retentive faculties is inseparable from advanced age, seems the general opinion. I would ask if it is a condition of mind, exclusively confined to the old? I think I have known the blooming and the vigorous to forget many things. The young girl may forget to learn her lessons, and the graduate of college the lessons that he has learned. The philosopher has been known to forget his own theories, and the eloquent statesman to pay his debts. It is not the exclusive province of grey hairs to forget attainments, resolutions, or promises. There was a

gentleman who had the reputation of forgetting the precise hour that had been appointed for his marriage, and was found prolonging a walk, when the bridal party had assembled. Whether this was real forgetfulness, or affectation, I was not given distinctly to understand. But, at any rate, he had not lost his memory through age.

Consider what untiring efforts are made, to strengthen the retentive powers of the young. Stated lessons through their whole scholastic period, daily recitation and repetition, conversation with teachers and fellow-pupils, deepening, riveting, incorporating knowledge with the very structure of the mind. Memory is thus made a prompt, active servant. She is strong through exercise. She has no time to idle away. She is busy, tinging dreams, even when the body sleeps.

But we, who have been warned of her disposition to become a deserter, take few precautions to detain her. Perhaps we feed her on the old, mouldy corn, and neglect to give her a taste of the new harvest. Cognizance of

passing things, as well as of recorded events, is essential to her healthful condition.

I had a friend, God bless every memorial and mention of him, who to the verge of eighty, labored to preserve a naturally strong memory, not only by interest in the concerns of others, but by learning daily, by heart, something from books. Can we not form the habit of acquiring, verbatim, every day, a few lines of poetry, or a single verse from the Bible?

Can't we remember? I suspect the failure to be that of sufficient repetition. No one is interested to hear us. The child, whose first faltering intonations we fostered with parental pride, is immersed in the cares of life, and can not regard our fragmentary gleanings. We need not expect our children, or grandchildren, to listen to our mental gatherings, as we have done to theirs. Friends and visitants, we would not wish to annoy, and thus the privilege of repetition, on which memory so much depends, is forfeited.

An aged gentleman, who was not willing to lose the advantage of deepening the traces

of a course of history he was pursuing, devised an ingenious expedient. A promising youth, the expenses of whose education he was kindly defraying, came daily at a regular time to read to him. He employed a portion of this interval, in a condensed statement of what he had perused in solitude, and was surprised to find how tenaciously it afterwards adhered to remembrance. Thus the pupil unconsciously became a teacher, and the benefactor shared in his own gifts.

Why would it not be well for neighbors who are advanced in years, to meet at allotted periods, and converse critically of the authors they are reading, and repeat what they have considered worthy to be committed to memory? If it should seem too much like a school, is there any objection to that? Why might there not be schools for the aged, as well as "schools of the prophets?" Life is a school. "I shall be thankful to die, learning something," said a wise man.

The truth is, that Memory requires more culture, than the aged are inclined to give

her. They take it for granted that she must decay, and antedate the time. They release her from service among the living present, and force her to look only backward, until the sinews of her neck are stiffened. One method of engraving what we do not wish to forget, is to teach it to others. An auditory of little ones will usually hang around the old person who tells them stories. Grave truths, and sacred precepts, may be thus enwrapped in "sugary narrative," with a salutary and lasting influence. One aged person who had been in the habit of briefly writing in a journal, from early life, found it profitable in his nightly self-examination, to trace back the same day through many years, recalling the dealings of divine providence with himself and others, and selecting some subject for the little descriptive entertainment his grandchildren had been trained to expect from him every morning.

It has been already admitted that passing events are more difficult to be retained by the aged than those which were coeval with their prime. Is not the antidote, to mingle as much

interest and affection as possible with the moving drama of life, and its actors? to entwine around each new generation the links of love? Memory, thus fed by living sympathies, like the Roman captive, nourished at his daughter's breast, would sustain solitude and flourish.

" Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's care? and universal love
Strike, like a shaft of light, across the land?"

Should it be felt, or feared, that, in spite of every precaution, Memory does indeed grow inert to intellectual gatherings, or to the routine of daily events, that she records not, as formerly, the dates of history, or the names of men, let the *heart* breathe upon her. That is Ithuriel's spear. Though her key may have been so long used that some of its wards are worn, Love's hand can turn it.

Heart-memories are the most indelible. A woman of more than fourscore, in whom sickness had prostrated both physical and mental energies, failed to state correctly even the number of her children. A friend endeavored

to restore the imagery of active years, but in vain. At length, the circumstance of her father's leaving home to take a soldier's part in the war of our Revolution was accidentally mentioned. It had called forth the deep anxieties of an affectionate family, when she was yet a young child. The fountain of the heart heaved, light came to her eye, and a tear glittered there, as she murmured,

“I remember,—yes,—I remember his kiss when he turned away from the door. It is warm on my cheek now.”

If Memory is weary, it is safe to sustain her on the arm of that blessed charity which embraces all mankind. The religion whose seat is in the affections, survives when polemic fervor and theological subtleties are lost in oblivion. The instance of the aged clergyman, who forgot his boyhood's friend, the favorite son under whose roof he dwelt, and the darling babe who was daily brought to nestle in his bosom, yet remembered the name of his “dear Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,” is well-known, but always worthy of being repeated.

If holy love thus keeps alive the memory, like living waters at its root, when its green leaves are crisp with frost, let us labor to strengthen that love toward God, and likewise toward this fleeting world, precious because it is His world, and His hand has placed us as pilgrims in it. Yet, should we have evidence within ourselves that Memory has become vacillating or infirm, we will be in no haste to proclaim it on the house-tops. There are enough who are ready and swift to publish the declension, if we admit it ourselves. Rather should we struggle to keep hold of the hand of that old and tried friend as long as possible. We will not expose her weakness, nor say that she has deserted us, while we can touch the hem of her garment. We will not see her go forth, like Hagar from Abraham's tent, without putting on her shoulder the water-bottle that she may refresh herself in the wilderness. Though she return no more to the oaks of Mamre, yet, if we are at last so blessed as to meet the angels who visited there, she will be with them : — for, *she is never to die.*

CHAPTER V.

Beauty of Age.

The principle of beauty hath no age,
It looketh forth, even though the eye be dim,
The forehead frost-crown'd, yea, it looketh forth
Like holy star, on all whom God hath made.

THE *beauty of age!* Does any one call me ironical, or point the finger at me in derision? Verily, I am speaking in good faith.

Yet, am I not ignorant of what Time takes away. I know that he is prone to steal from the eye its lustre, and from the Parian brow its smoothness. The round cheek falls away at his ploughshare, and the dimples disappear. The hair, no longer abundant, leaves the bald crown, or withered temples unshielded. Its hues of chestnut, or auburn, or raven black, vanish, and the complexion, unrelieved by their

rich contrast, loses its tint of rose or lily, and settles into the trying companionship of iron-grey, or white. The erect form yields its dignity. The vertebral column bends, and the limbs resign their elasticity. Happy are they who are compelled to call in no aid from crutch or staff, to sustain their footsteps. The beautiful hand loses its plumpness, and bones, and sinews, and jagged veins become protuberant. Even the ear sometimes forfeits its delicate symmetry, and grows elephantine. The voice is prone to forget its harmony ; or, unmodified by its dental allies, “ pipes and whistles in its sound.”

All these deteriorations, and more than these, I admit, yet boldly sustain my argument, *the beauty of age*.

Where is it? In what does it consist? Its dwelling is in the soul, and it makes itself visible by radiations that reach the soul ; by the smile of benevolence, by limitless good will, by a saintly serenity, by the light of heaven, shining upon the head that is so near it.

The smile of Washington, which had always

possessed a peculiar charm, gathered force and sweetness from the snows of time. One who was accustomed to meet him in the family, says, "Whenever he gave me one of those smiles, I always felt the tears swelling under my eye-lids."

What an affecting sketch of the tranquil beauty of age, on which death has set its seal, is given in a letter from Pope, to an artist whom he desires to preserve the likeness of the mother whose declining years were soothed by his filial love and duty.

"My poor old mother is dead. I thank God that her death was as easy as her life has been innocent; and, as it cost her not a groan, or even a sigh, there is still upon her countenance such an expression of tranquillity, nay, almost of pleasure, that it is amiable to behold. It would afford the finest image of a saint expired that painter ever drew; and, it would be the greatest obligation which that art could bestow on a friend, if you could come and sketch it for me. I hope to see you soon, ere this winter-flower shall have faded. I will defer the

interment until to-morrow night. I know you love me, or I could not have written this, or indeed, at such a time, have written at all. Adieu. May you die as happy."

At his villa of Twickenham, bought with the first fruits of his translation of Homer's Iliad, the poet sheltered and solaced this venerable mother. From her honored seat at his fireside, her tender, simple message cheered him amid his toils. "I send you my daily prayers, and I bless you, my deare." More touching and admirable was the interchange of these hallowed sensibilities than all the melody of his verse.

Of the intrinsic beauty of age, I have been so happy as to see some distinguished specimens. My infant eyes opened upon one. My earliest perceptions of the beautiful and holy were entwined with silver hairs, and I bless God that the fourteen first years of life were nurtured under their serene shadow. A fair countenance, a clear, blue eye, and a voice of music, return to me as I recall the image of that venerated lady, over whom more than threescore

and ten years had passed ere I saw the light. Her tall, graceful form, moving with elastic step through the parterres, whose numerous flowers she superintended, and her brow, raised in calm meditation from the sacred volume she was reading, were to me beautiful. Many sought to take counsel of her, both for the things of this life and the next, and her words were so uttered as to make them happier as well as wiser. The sorrowful came to be enlightened by the sunbeam that dwelt in her spirit, and the children of want to find bread and a garment; for, her wealth was the Lord's, and when she cast it into His treasury, it was with a smile, as if she was herself the receiver. The beauty of the soul was hers, that waxeth not old. Love was in her heart to all whom God had made, a love not ending in blind indulgence, but seeking to elevate them in the scale of existence. Thus it was until eighty-eight years had passed over her; and, when she entered the exalted society for which she had been fitted here, tears flowed widely and freely, as for one in their prime. At her grave, I learned my

first lesson of a bursting grief that has never been forgotten. Let none say that the aged die unloved, or unmourned by the young. It is not so.

Another I knew, without munificent endowment of mind, person, or position. Yet, had he to the last a beauty that love followed,—the beauty of kind regard to all creatures, and of a perfect temperament that never yielded to anger. Hence, the wheels of life ran on without chafing; and, in his eighty-eighth year, his step was as elastic as at twenty, the florid hue of his cheek unchanged, and his bright, brown hair, without a thread of silver. He loved the plants and flowers, and knew how scientifically to promote their welfare, and to enrich the dark, brown mould with golden fruits, and fair vine-clusters. By these sweet recreations, life was made sweeter, and renewed its pleasures, like the fresh spring-buds, and the bird that returns again to its nest after the winter. Sorrows he had tasted, but they left no cloud, only a deeper tenderness for all who mourned. His religion had no mixture of coldness toward those who

differed from him, no exclusiveness, no bigotry. The frailties of those around, he regarded with gentleness, or with pity. He blamed not, upbraided not. On his loving soul there was no slander-spot. His life was like one long smile, closing with a music-strain. And on it was written, as a fair motto, "*the man without an enemy.*"

From the sacred pictures of the departed that hang in the soul's temple, I would fain select another. It is of a friend, who, in early years, suffered from feebleness of constitution, yet, by care and temperance, so renovated his health, that age was to him better and more vigorous than youth. A strong perception of the beautiful, both in nature and art, lighted up his mind with a perpetual sunbeam. His fine taste went hand in hand with a perfect philanthropy, so that what he admired he patronized, and what he patronized he spread abroad, that others might share his enjoyment. The gates of his spacious rural villa were thrown open as a pleasure-ground for all the people; and, with the treasures of literature and the arts, he

enriched the noble public institute that he founded. The holy truth walked ever by his side ; while independence of thought and action, with regard to men, was mingled with the deepest humility and reverence toward God. To draw merit from obscurity, to sustain honest industry, to encourage humble virtue, to stimulate the young to higher effort, and silently to relieve the suffering poor, were his pleasures. And, with these pleasures would sometimes steal over his brow an expression denied to what the world calls beauty, "the set of features, and complexion, the tincture of the skin that she admires." It was the beauty of the soul, looking forth in the life of one, who faithfully, and without ostentation, held his large fortune in stewardship for God and for man.

By his side was a being of an angelic spirit, who strengthened all his high resolves, and tenderly divided his sorrows and his joys. Methinks I see her, as if she now sate beside me ; her delicate, upright, symmetrical form, the grace of her movements, the magic of her smile, the courteous manners, that charmed

even the unrefined, the tasteful adaptation of costume to position, and the perfect judgment that led her to choose

Best means for wisest ends, and speak right words
At fitting times.

She was said to have been exceedingly beautiful in youth, but the portraits of that period bore no resemblance to her countenance in advanced years, so much had Time changed its structure. Yet, she held a talisman, over which he had no power, a goodness, disrobed of self, enchanting all that came within its sphere, and a trusting piety that knew no cloud.

Thus she, and the companion of her days, made their childless home attractive to every visitant, until the verge of fourscore, when they entered a mansion not made with hands. She was first summoned, and through a lingering decline, sought strength from above, to adhere, as far as possible to her habits of usefulness, and that gentle self-renunciation, which, in promoting the good of others, forgot its own sufferings. As her step grew feeble, her brow

became more sweetly serene, and daily she took her seat at the table, and the fireside, that she might cheer him by her presence, whose life of life was in her.

The last night that she was with us below, she spent as usual, some time in her oratory, ere retiring to her chamber for repose. What the angels said to her, in that sacred seclusion, or what she said to her God, we know not ; but, at the midnight hour, they came to bear her to Him. And she was ready.

It was not for us to hear their whisper, "*Sister spirit, come away!*" but, we saw that they left on the untroubled brow, a smile as calm, as holy as their own. And we gave glory to God, through our tears, for her blessed example, who had departed this life in His faith and fear.

Countless instances might be adduced of the subdued and saintly lustre that marks the sunset of well-spent life. And, it would be pleasant to me thus to enlarge, for it has been my privilege often to be near, and always to admire the "hoary head found in the way of righteousness."

I must indulge myself and my readers with one more example. It occurs in a description from the graceful pen of N. P. Willis, of his own beautiful rural life on the banks of the Hudson.

“Our venerable neighbor, of eighty years of age, with his white locks, and face beaming with the benignity of a summer’s evening, came back at the first softening of the season. He goes to the city,—this beloved neighbor of ours,—when the roads become impassable for his tremulous feet; but, he gains health, (as he was saying, with his usual truthful wisdom, to-day,) not alone from the sidewalks and other opportunities of exercise. In the *mental ‘change of air’* he finds an invigorating tonic, (one, by the way, which I am glad of this bright example to assist in recommending to the dispirited invalid, for there is more medicine in it than would be believed, without trial,) and he inhales it in the larger field that he finds for the instructive benevolence which forms his occupation in the country. He passes his time in the city in visiting schools, hospitals, prisons,—every place where human love and wisdom would look in together. He speaks fluently. His voice is singularly sweet and winning; and, with his genial and beautiful expression of countenance, his fine features, and the venerable dignity of his bent form, in its Quaker garb, he is listened to with exceeding interest. Children particularly delight to hang on his words. One great charm, perhaps, is his singular retention of creativeness of mind,—though so old, still continuing to talk as he newly *thinks*, not as he *remembers*. The circumstances of the moment, therefore,

suffice for a theme, or for the attractive woof on which to brooder instruction, and he does it with a mingled playfulness and earnestness which form a most attractive as well as valuable lesson. Can any price be put on such an old man, as the belonging of a neighborhood? Can landscape gardening invent anything more beautiful than such a form daily seen coming through an avenue of trees, his white locks waving in the wind, and the children running out to meet him with delight? Friend S—— strolls to Idlewild, on any sunny day, and joins us at any meal, or lies down to sleep or rest on a sofa in the library,—and, can painting or statuary give us any semblance, more hallowing to the look and character of a home, more cheering and dignifying to its atmosphere and society? Among the Arts—among the refinements of taste—in the culture of Beauty, in America—let us give Old Age its preëminence! The best arm-chair, by the fire-side, the privileged room, with its warmest curtains and freshest flowers, the preference and first place in all groups and scenes in which Age can mingle—such is the proper frame and setting for this priceless picture in a home. With less slavery to business, and better knowledge and care of health, we shall have more Old Age in our country: in other words, for our homes there will be more of this most crowning beauty.”

Youth hath its fascinating smile,
 Its cheek of rose-bud ray ;
 They charm the admiring eye awhile,
 Then fade, and fleet away ;
 But, Age, with heaven-taught wisdom crown'd,
 That waits its Father's will,
 And walks in love with all around,
 Hath higher beauty still.

Are not the changes in man's life, like those of the day and the seasons, beautiful? Morn is fair, but we would not always have it morning. Noon is brilliant, but the wearied senses crave repose, as from the long excitement of an Arctic summer. Evening, with her placid moon, through the chequering branches, disguises every blemish, bathes the simplest architecture in a flood of silver light, and makes the vine-clad cottage and the antique column alike beautiful.

Even though it should chance to be winter, yet shrink not to come forth, with a heart to admire and love; for, through the bare trees, the silver queen of heaven looks down more clearly, and the untrodden snow-hills rejoice in her beam, and, amid the pure, blue ether, the stars multiply, each giving secret sweet-voiced welcome to the soul that is soon to rise above their spheres.

CHAPTER VI.

Air.

“And now, behold, your tender nurse, the air,
And common neighbor, that, with order due,
Whene'er you breathe, doth in accordance move,
Now in, now out, in time and measure true ;
And, when you speak, so well the art she loves,
That, doubling oft, she doth herself renew ;
For, all the words that from your lips repair
Are but the countless tricks and turnings of the air.”

SIR JOHN DAVIES.

THE friendship of the elements for man is beautiful. To inspire his frail fabric with vitality, to warm, to refresh, and finally to cover it when it sleeps the dreamless sleep, are their kind and perpetual services. Each of these “ministering particles,” have, in their turn, won eloquent praise.

Zoroaster and his followers deified the subtle

Fire, in which they recognized the great vivifying principle of the universe. Pliny, and other ancient philosophers, applauded the pervading love of the Earth for her offspring, which, like a watchful mother, fed and clothed the creature of the dust, and folded his latest sorrow in her bosom. Water has been the favorite of the moderns, who have discovered in it new affinities with health, and almost uncontrollable agencies in the realm of nature. Our own simple remarks will be confined to the remaining element of Air, which the quaint poet, at their head, made some two hundred and fifty years since, a chosen theme for his verse.

It may not, indeed, be subjugated by man to such varieties of servitude as some of its compeers, yet he can scarcely exist a moment without its permission. The earth he burdens with palaces and pyramids, the pent fires do his bidding, and his ships rule the mountain-wave. But, he inflates a balloon, and the storm-cloud overturns it, and, perhaps, takes the life of the

headlong æronaut. In his reverie, he builds a castle on the air, and where is it?

Yet, this imperious and impervious element, the master of his life, how varied and earnest are its ministrations for his welfare. If he will systematically combine it with active exercise, it gives him strength and vigor. Of this, the advanced in years seldom are sufficiently aware. They suffer lassitude to steal over them, till, like the sleeper among Alpine snows, they arise no more. A daily walk or drive in the open air, preserves energy, and quickens the tide of sympathy for the living world.

The mother country gives us, in this respect, good examples, if we would but heed them. Her young infants are sent forth in the fresh morning air. Her little ones gambol in the lawns and parks. Her ladies are great pedestrians, fearless of rain or cold. Her gentlemen, however burdened with important concerns, always find time for muscular action. Even those who have reached a patriarchal age, often persevere in equestrian exercise, that elegant form of recreation, which, more than any other,

keeps alive the consciousness of manly power and dignity.

I have seen, in my own country, some striking instances of the protracted power and enjoyment of this invigorating exercise. Among childhood's unfading sketches of my native place, is the figure of a beautiful old man of eighty-four, Dr. Joshua Lathrop, of Norwich, Conn., who, until the brief illness that preceded dissolution, took daily equestrian excursions, withheld only by very inclement weather. Methinks, I clearly see him now ;—his small, well-knit, perfectly upright form, mounted upon his noble, lustrous black horse, readily urged to an easy canter, his servant a little in the rear. I see the large, fair, white wig, with its depth of curls, the smartly cocked hat, the rich buckles at knee and shoe, and the nicely plaited ruffles, over hand and bosom, that in those days designated the gentleman of the old school. Repeated rides in that varied and romantic region, were so full of suggestive thought to his religious mind, that he was led to construct a good little book, in dialogue form,

on the works of nature, and nature's God, entitled, "The Father and Son," which we younglings received with great gratitude from its kind-hearted author: juvenile works not being then so numerous as to be slightly prized. His quick, elastic step in walking, his agility in mounting and dismounting his steed, as well as his calm, happy temperature, were remarkable, and a model for younger men.

Yet, it is not necessary thus to turn to the far-off past, for examples of perseverance and grace in this exhilarating exercise. Scarcely two years since, I saw the venerable Colonel White, of Danbury, Conn., now eighty-five, on horseback, at the imposing ceremonies connected with the public erection of a monument to the memory of General David Wooster, the revolutionary patriot and martyr. Amid thousands thronging the streets, he was observed passing and re-passing, at an early hour, to the lofty Cemetery-Hill, engaged in preliminary arrangements for the splendid masonic rites that were to mark the burial of the fallen brave. As the long procession moved on, with civic and

military pageantry, his spirited animal took fright at the unfurling of a banner, when the octogenarian rider, (to whom he was a stranger, having given up his own horses for the services of the day,) managed him with a serene self-possession and perfect skill, which few men in the prime of their strength could have surpassed or equalled.

The Rev. Dr. Kendal, of Massachusetts, also in his eighty-sixth year, perseveres in that active out-door exercise which preserves energy and vigor. Driving himself, a short time since, several miles from home, the reins chanced to part, and the horse became unmanageable. It being in the country, none were near to render assistance. The venerable gentleman, leaping from the carriage, over the wheels, seized the horse by the head, while at a brisk movement, and subjected him to control. It was pleasant to see a feat, of such activity, so admirably performed, at so advanced a period of life.

To those not inured to equestrian exercise, a daily walk in the open air, not so far extended as to involve weariness or fatigue, is salutary,

even in extreme old age. To connect these excursions with a definite object, either the cherishing of friendly intercourse, the sight of an interesting prospect, edifice, or institution, or the dispensing some comfort to the abode of poverty, adds decidedly to their happy physical influence.

Of Isaac T. Hopper, the benevolent Quaker, who, till his eighty-first year, continued his daily researches through the streets of New York, on errands of mercy, with such proverbial activity, it was said, by his biographer, Mrs. Child, that "he would scarcely allow the drivers to stop for him, at ascending or descending from their vehicles. Few ever passed him without asking who he was ; for, not only did his primitive dress, broad-brimmed hat, and antique shoe-buckles, attract attention, but the beauty and benevolence of his face, were sure to fix the eye of ordinary discernment. He was a living temperance lecture, and those who desire to preserve good looks, need not ask a more infallible recipe than that sweet temper and

active, overflowing benevolence which made his countenance so pleasing to all."

Peregrine White, the first-born Saxon in New England, the lone baby of Cape Cod, who opened his eyes ere the tossing Mayflower touched Plymouth Rock, trod with firm step, until his death at eighty-four, the sands of Marshfield, taking, with unshrinking breast, deep draughts of the bleak sea-air. His eldest daughter, Sarah, the wife of Mr. Thomas Young, of Scituate, Mass., inherited his hardihood and love of the open air, and retained an unusual degree of health and mental activity, till the advanced age of ninety-two.

Peregrine White, over whose honored remains a monument is soon to be raised, served the colony with fidelity, both in civil and military offices. "He continued," say the ancient records, "vigorous and of a comely aspect to the last;" battling the sharp breezes of a rock-bound shore, while monarch after monarch, reared in the luxury of palaces, fell from the throne of the parent realm.

King James, the pedant, found a tomb,
King Charles at Whitehall bled ;
Stout Cromwell held a twelve years' rule,
And slumber'd with the dead ;
The second Charles, with gibe and jest,
His royal realm survey'd ;
The second James, in panic haste,
Fled from the wreck he made ;
William and Mary, hand in hand,
Their sceptre's sway sustain'd ;
Queen Anne, the last of Stuart's band,
In pomp and splendor reign'd :
Seven sovereigns, from old Albion's throne,
Stern Death, the spoiler, swept,
While still his course, erect and firm,
New England's patriarch kept.

Frequent open communion with the atmospheric air, if not an absolute necessity of our being, seems an essential condition of vigorous health. The pursuits that promote that intercourse, such as horticultural, or floricultural, it is, therefore, desirable to cultivate.

On inquiring for an aged man, at his door, a bright-eyed boy said,

“ My grandfather has gone out for his morning-walk. I love to have him go, because he always comes back pleasant and happy.”

The child had gotten the true philosophy of the case. We met the silver-haired friend, returning with a freshened cheek, and a smile, as if he rejoiced in the sweet air, and in Him who gave it. A kind word had he ever for all, and so he said cheerfully,

“I have just set up a banner, to wave in the breeze, when I am dead.”

It seems he had been transplanting a shade-tree, of a species often destined to attain considerable size.

“The soil was not congenial,” he added, “so I had it removed for an area of three or four feet, and stepped into the pit myself, to place the roots and delicate fibres at ease in their new bed. I sprinkled, at first, the pulverized earth and rich compost over them, while my man added water gradually, treading down the surface firmly, as much as to say to the new comer, ‘keep at home,’ and finishing with a cavity around the trunk, a casket to hold such pearl-drops as the clouds see fit to give.”

Perceiving that his practical remarks were listened to with interest, he kindly proceeded,

“I caused the body and principal boughs to be bathed in soap-suds, and rubbed with a coarse cloth, to refresh it hydropathically after the trial of leaving its old home; and, before the high winds of winter come, shall have stones placed around, to keep the roots from being shaken and troubled. My wife takes an interest in these things. I love to have her hold the tree, when I transplant it. I fancy it is more likely to grow, and get a blessing, if her hand has been on it. We planted a tree at the birth of all our children. Perhaps we shall yet set out a grove before we die.”

The animated countenance of the aged speaker reminded me of the enthusiasm with which Sir Walter Scott used to expatiate on the “exquisite pleasures of planting.” The greater part of the noble trees at Barley-Wood were placed there by the hand of the venerable Mrs. Hannah More; and, a cabinet-table, which she prized, and often pointed out to the attention of visitants, was inlaid with small diamond-shaped pieces of wood, from different trees of her own rearing. Those who in early life

rejoiced in the culture of flowers, their own emblem of hope and beauty, might with propriety, in later years, transfer this care to the nurture of fruit and shade trees, those types of bounty and beneficence; acceptable parting gifts to mankind, and blessings to the nested birds, "that sing among the branches."

To those whose infirmities preclude the pleasure of active exercise out of doors, there still remain restricted forms of fellowship with the renovating air, which it is important to secure. The invalid lady who perseveres as far as possible in her daily ride, notwithstanding lassitude or debility tempts to the indulgence of repose, does not lose her reward. The blessed element, thus solicited, sustains the worn frame, and sweeps away many of the morbid fancies and groundless fears that disease engenders.

A lady, who was not able to bear the fatigue of systematic riding, told me she had maintained some degree of vigor, and, perhaps, resisted pulmonary tendencies, by a brief yet systematic intercourse with the morning air, for a short time, through her window. Opening it, and, if

the current proved too fresh, wrapping herself in a shawl, she inhaled deep draughts, holding her breath until the minute vessels of the lungs were saturated with air, and then casting it off, by throwing out the arms to expand the chest.

Mrs. Emma Willard, of Troy, in her remarkable treatise, "On the motive powers that produce the circulation of the blood," thus describes a course by which she has been enabled long to persist in the preparation of those excellent works which have given her a high rank among American writers. After speaking of her care to preserve an equal and moderate degree of warmth, during the cold seasons, she says:—

"In the morning, I usually exercised about an hour, in accordance with some housekeeping habits. During the day, I took exercise once in two hours. Letting down the upper sash, and facing the current of fresh air, I began moderately, increasing my exercise until it became, for a few moments, violent; stepping backward and forward, to keep my face to the window, and moving my arms in a manner to expand the chest. Then, as the quick, deep breathing came on, and the inspirations of air were as refreshing as water from a cool spring in summer, I checked my exercise to give full play to the respiratory organs, and, when I had breathed the pure air till I was satisfied, closed

the window, sat down, and wrapped my cloak around me, to make, for a few minutes longer, breathing my chief employ. The additional garment kept the heightened temperature which exercise had given from passing off by evaporation, and I sat down to my writing, with fresh blood in my brain and hand, and with a warmth far more genial than that of a furnace heat. After dinner, I 'slept awhile,' and then employed myself in reading; and, after tea, completed the old rhyme by 'walking a mile.' In the evening, I thus found myself as vigorous for writing as in the morning, and often wrote several hours before retiring."

As the result of this system, she states that, at the end of three years and a half, during which, especially in the winter, she labored from twelve to fourteen hours a day, in study and writing, she had better health than at the commencement of these severe toils. This philosophical and Christian care of her physical welfare has doubtless been repaid in the uncommon preservation of those energies, which, from early youth, were developed in the noble profession of a teacher and pioneer in the field of education. More than five thousand of her own sex have been under her instruction; and, in every State of our Union, they lovingly remember her. It was a source of satisfaction

to her friends that, in her sixty-eighth year, she should have made her second tour in Europe, with a bright spirit, and much of the lingering comeliness of her early prime, cheered also by that appreciation in foreign lands, which she has so well merited in her own.

Air, whose free, loving embrace, greeteth every one who cometh into the world, should be gratefully welcomed until they go out of it. Painful contrast has taught its value to the pining sufferer in the fever-wards of some crowded hospital, and to the pale prisoner in his grated cell. The captives in the hideous "donjon-keeps" of the feudal times, or the wretched victims in the Black Hole, at Calcutta, terribly tested the worth of that gift to which we are too often culpably indifferent.

I hope to be excused for any minute or common-place detail, which may have occurred in this chapter, and for having written *con amore* of what has seemed to me an important adjunct, if not an essential element of that priceless possession, "*mens sanæ, in corpore sano.*"

But, this subtle element of air, so powerful

over our physical and mental organization, hath it aught to do with moral structure, or spiritual welfare? Yes.—Modified by eloquence, it rules the multitude of minds; swelling into music, it stirs up passionate admiration; wrought into words of compassion, it heals the broken in heart; breathing from the soul of piety, it quickens the souls of others, as by the spirit of the Lord.

Whom see we on yonder couch? One, whose work on earth is finished. Air is about to forsake him. The lungs collapse. He is lifeless.

Hath he then taken final leave of the air? No. In the form of words here uttered, *air shaped into sound*,—in the form of deeds springing from those words,—*air shaped into action*, it shall meet him at the judgment.

Let us, therefore, dear friends, as long as we are dwellers in the body, beware how we use this wondrous element of *air*, lest that on which we have never laid our hand, should fearfully confront us, when the “books are opened, and the dead, small and great, stand before God.”

CHAPTER VII.

Domestic Anniversaries.

“This is the place. Stand still, my steed,
Let me review the scene,
And summon from the shadowy Past,
The things that once have been :
For, Past and Present here unite,
Beneath Time’s flowing tide,
Like footprints hidden by a brook,
But seen on either side.”

LONGFELLOW.

GERMANY, where domestic anniversaries are the most pleasantly cherished, is distinguished by a healthful growth of domestic happiness. Recurrences of the marriage-day, of the births of children, grandchildren, and especially of the silver-haired grandparents, are welcomed with fond and fervent congratulation.

In that country, the Golden Bridal as it is

called, or the fiftieth return of the marriage-day, is marked by ceremonies peculiarly striking and national. Preparations for a domestic festival are made, and the rooms richly adorned with flowers. The venerable pair, arrayed in their best garments, and surrounded by children and near relatives, receive visitors and congratulations as if about to begin life anew. This sentiment pervades, in some measure, the whole entertainment. Wedding gifts are brought, and, mingled with them, are notes of love and good wishes, bursting forth, as the German heart is wont to do, into strains of poetry.

A recent traveler, Mr. R. S. Willis, has thus graphically described a scene of this nature, which he was permitted to witness

“The venerably youthful pair sate side by side, in two great arm-chairs, the very picture of mellow and serene old age. Those capacious chairs were also among the gifts, having been exquisitely embroidered by fair hands. Suspended above them, hung their portraits, taken, indeed, at a much earlier period, but which seemed not half so beautiful, in their youthful lineaments, as the venerable heads which now, in the calm Indian summer of life, rose beneath them. From two large vases below, on

either side of the portraits, sprang two vigorous shoots of living ivy, ascending and enwreathing them, and forming a kind of triumphal arch over the couple beneath, whose accomplishment of fifty years of such unclouded, exemplary married life, might well be regarded as a triumph, and as such be celebrated."

Then follows an enumeration of the presents, many of which were costly, for the aged bridegroom, having been a composer and teacher of music, had instructed some pupils of wealth and rank, who vied with each other, on this occasion, in testifying their affectionate regard. A wreath of laurel was thrown over the snowy locks of the patriarch, and one of myrtle placed on the head of his companion, by a fair young girl of the Rhine, an affianced bride, who, in her kiss, besought the blessing of one who had so long beautified that "holy estate," upon which she, as a novice, was about to enter.

After the dinner, where two long tables were filled by descendants and guests, a deputation of the musical pupils assembled in an adjoining apartment, to cheer, by the melody of voice and instrument, the heart of their old master, and his friends.

“No sooner,” continues the narrator, “had he recognized the performers, and the tones of his own early devotional music, than, lifting the little velvet cap which always covered his head, his silver locks floating out, and raising his glistening eyes to God, to whom those solemn strains were addressed, he seemed for a moment overcome with gratitude to Him.”

In our own country, these household eras are sometimes regarded, though with less of romantic accompaniment. John Quincy Adams, the last summer that he passed on earth, celebrated in his own sacred home-circle, the Golden Wedding; an epoch which was also reached by his own venerable parents, walking hand in hand toward that clime where “love is indestructable.”

An instance of the quiet observance of the *sixtieth* anniversary I have heard described,—a rare occurrence in this world of mortality. The age of both the parties exceeded fourscore, yet their forms were unbowed; there was even a lingering of early comeliness, and that smile of the spirit which gathers depth and meaning from long knowledge of this life, and firm hope of a better. They had entered, in the bloom of youth, the conjugal relation, and “com-

mended it in the sight of all men," by an example of steadfast affection, and amiable virtues. Three generations surrounded them with loving reverence, and, in the arms of one bright-eyed young mother, was the germ of a fourth,—a rose-bud within a rose. Among the antique things which were preserved and exhibited, were the small salver with which they commenced house-keeping, and the very same little cups of transparent china, in which the young wife, threescore years before, had poured tea at her first hospitalities. Warm words of greeting cheered this festival, and a fair table of refreshments, while another was spread with love-tokens, and gifts of friendship. Among them was a simple offering, yet of singular significance; a small parallelogram of the purest white marble, wrought into a double watch-case, and surmounted in the center by a cross of the same material. In the cavities lined with crimson velvet, reposed the two watches of the aged pair, the golden links of their chains intertwined and enwreathing the cross. There were the monitors and measures of time, long

used, but soon to be needed no more,—and the symbols of their own undying love, clasping the prop that could never fail or forsake it.

Heartfelt cheerfulness marked this occasion, yet nothing that could war with the prayer and hymn which begun and closed it, for so many of the descendants shared in the piety of their honored ancestors, that such worship was in unison with their aspirations and joys. Sixty years to have walked hand in hand, helpful and loving, on their appointed way over mountain and flood, and through gardens wherein were sepulchres, lending the shoulder to each other's burdens, and keeping God's sunbeam bright in the soul; to have impressed the precepts of a Redeemer on the young creatures who came into life under the shadow of their tree of love, and to become themselves more and more conformed to "the example of His great humility," was a victory that might not only be admired on earth, but approved in Heaven.

An interesting celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Wright, of East Hampton, Mass., took place at

the commencement of the present year. The 14th of January, 1856, was truly a winter's day,—cold, icy, and keen,—but, with a pure, exhilarating atmosphere. The evening lamps glittered early, and, at six o'clock, commenced the festive scene.

The aged couple were in health and happiness. The memory of God's great goodness to them sate on the smile with which they welcomed kindred and friends. Four sons were there, with their households. The fifth, whose family altar was amid the snows of Wisconsin, cheered their hearts by an affectionate epistle.

A few invited coevals and neighbors gather, with their congratulations. But what venerable form enters, with such a saintly smile? All cluster around him. It is the same man of God who, sixty years before, had pronounced the nuptial benediction, the Rev. Dr. Williston, whose ninety-third winter sits freshly on him. Still, he lifts his hand, and blesses them in the name of the Lord.

Four of the guests at the original wedding are present at this commemoration. Two more

survive, but denizens of a distant State. It was a touching part of the scene when the eldest son, well-known as the former Principal of the Williston Seminary, gave utterance to his feelings of gratitude and reverence for his aged parents, interweaving appropriate facts and circumstances that absorbed the attention of every hearer.

Happy and forcible remarks were familiarly made by others, on the beauty of bringing forth fruit in old age, and of that filial piety which has kept the blessed commandment with promise. "Then the young rose up and praised the aged, as having done well in their generation; and, the aged replied by modest disclaimer, insisting that they had not done so well, but that the young should do far better, following more closely the Higher Pattern, even Christ."

When the season allotted to refreshments arrived, there were seen seated around the board of distinguished honor six personages, whose united ages amounted to four hundred and eighty years. That table of ancients!

What countless memories were there embodied, what treasures of experience, what wealth of christian hope. Sweet and solemn was the voice imploring a blessing and rendering thanks for that rich repast; the voice of that beloved, white-haired minister, soon after called to a more exalted and eternal banquet.

The closing exercises of this cheering and rational festivity were reading from the Scriptures, prayer, and the Doxology in the devout "Old Hundred," swelled by every voice. Then came the kind parting wishes, and the separation at *nine*, that hour wisely set apart by the early fathers of our country for drawing homeward every wandering wing to its rest, and folding it in supplication that hallowed the nightly repose.

Rare was this sixtieth anniversary, not only in itself, but for the number of the aged there convened,—their comfortable health,—their possession of muscular activity and mental vigor,—their sympathy in social feeling and the faith of the Gospel,—their christian rejoicing in their children and their children's children.

It has been mentioned that Music bore a part in this varied festival. The melodies, so often overlooked in modern psalmody, were summoned, and many an aged heart thrilled with early, tender associations, at the full tones of "St. Martins" and "Lenox," "Majesty" and "Greenville." Among the hymns adapted to these antique tunes, was the following one, composed for the occasion.

Three times twenty! Three times twenty!

How those years have sped away,
Since the wreath of young affection,
Brightened on our Bridal Day;
Like a shadow o'er the mountain,
Like a billow on the main,
Like a dream, when one awaketh,
Tinted both with joy and pain.

Three times twenty! Three times twenty!

While the years their circles wove,
Smiling infants sprang around us,
Scions from our Tree of Love!
And, with patriarchal pleasure,
Still another race we view,
And, in their unfolding promise,
Seem to live our lives anew.

Three times twenty! Three times twenty!

He, who gave our marriage vow,

Hallowing it with prayer and blessing,
 Cheers us by his presence now :
 Faithful Pastor ! here we greet thee,
 May the flock that heard thy voice,
 Near the great Chief Shepherd meet thee,
 And for-evermore rejoice.

Three times twenty ! Three times twenty !
 Many a friend of earlier days,
 To a higher sphere translated,
 Swells the angel hymn of praise ;
 And, the glorious hope we treasure,
 Side by side with them to stand,
 Whensoe'er our Father's wisdom
 Warns us to that Better Land !

A pleasant custom is it to notice the birth-days of our coevals, and especially of those older than ourselves. A few words of congratulation, a few cheering wishes for the future, convincing them that they are neither forgotten nor disregarded, will be of more real value than costly gifts. Affectionate references to the path in which they have walked, and the home toward which they draw near, aid in giving strength for the remainder of their pilgrimage.

It is true that, to prolonged life, funeral anniversaries multiply. Many of our way-marks

are tombstones. We may render there the offering of a strewn flower, and a faithful tear. Yet, let the tribute be in silence, between God and our own soul. Why need we sadden the young with the ghosts of our buried joys?

Still, these "oaks of weeping," may yield a salutary influence. The poet has well said, that he best "mourns the dead who lives as they desire." The return, both of their nativity and departure may be made serviceable to the living. We may then give new vigor to their example, continue their good works, or complete their unfinished charities. I had a friend who consecrated the birth-day of the loved ones who had gone before, by some labor in their favorite field of benevolence, or in that sphere of charitable effort, which he knew they would have approved, had it been presented to them. The heart of the sad orphan, or lonely widow, was made glad, cells of sickness entered, as by an angel of mercy, the page of knowledge spread for ignorance, and salvation on mission-wings sent to those who sate in the shadow of death.

Was not the melody of such gratitude heard in heaven? Was it not a memorial meet for glorified spirits? Touched it not their pure brows with a new smile, that their entrance into high Heaven's bliss should have annual record of praise and thanksgiving on earth?

"Again returns the day," says the mournful mother to her heart, "in which my darling, the light of my eyes, went down into silence. The very hour draws nigh, when, for the last time, his eyes beheld and blessed me, and his hand would fain have once more clasped mine. Ah! how faint was its trembling pressure: the chill entered into my soul.

"Many charities did he love: for his sake will I cherish them. He felt for the toil-worn sailors, 'mounting up to the heavens, going down again to the depths, their souls melted because of trouble.' I will send a donation to the good men who have combined to shelter them, and teach them the way to Heaven.

"He pitied those from whose dim eyes the beautiful things of creation were shut out. The

poor blind shall be made glad through him, this day.

“How his eye kindled with varying emotion, as he read in his young boyhood of the mutiny in the ship *Bounty*,—of the open boat in which Bligh and his fellow-sufferers doled out so long the bullet’s weight of bread, and the few water-drops,—and, of the *Crusoe* settlement on Pitcairn’s island, from whence, as good may spring out of evil, now rises the Sabbath worship of a little Christian community. A token of his remembrance shall go forth to that lone oasis of the Pacific.

“He loved little children. When he was himself a child, he wished to give every destitute one food, and a garment, and a book. The orphan institution shall be reminded through my gifts of his birth-day. And, if my heart should single out any one from that number, to provide for, to watch over, and to guide on life’s future way with maternal counsels, I know it would be pleasing to the departed, for in such things he ever took delight.

“He revered the old and gray-headed,

however poor and despised. I will seek them out this day, in their desolate abodes, and put into their withered hands, his alms, and speak such kind words as shall bring joy like a sunbeam over their furrowed brows. And, when they would fain express their gratitude, I will say, 'Thank not *me!* I have done it for his sake!—*for his sake.*'"

So, the mother was comforted for her son, and found that solace from his birth-day in heaven, which it had never given her while he dwelt in tents of clay.

But, for us, who, having passed far on our journey, and lost many friends, are tempted to linger long among the graves, it is peculiarly desirable that cheering anniversaries should have free scope, and predominate. We had rather shed a sunbeam than a midnight chill. Let us render the birth of every new year, and each return of the season of our dear Redeemer's nativity, a time of joy to every heart within the sphere of our influence, not overlooking the lowliest servant, or the humblest child. It is better to be harmless finger-posts, pointing to

paths of innocent happiness, than flaming swords to fright away the traveler from Eden.

Pleasant mirth, and amusing recollections of earlier days, are medicinal to the old, and not uninteresting to younger auditors. Perhaps the following original Valentine, which has never before been published, may serve to illustrate the sprightliness of mind that sometimes lingers amid declining years.

“ ’Tis more than threescore years and ten,
Our life’s allotted span,
Since first, in youthful, happy days,
Our friendship true began,
’Tis more than threescore years and ten,
Since, as a joyous child,
I played with you on Stratford Green,
In many a frolic wild.

As I look back upon those years,
Threescore and ten and five,
Of all the mates we numbered then,
But we two are alive,
We two, of all that happy band,
Of sportive girls and boys,
Who wept together childish griefs,
Or smiled o’er childish joys.

And we're far down the vale of years,
And time is fleeting fast,
Yet, I would be a child once more,
And live again the past.
Years seventy-five! how thrills my heart,
As memory bears me back,
To tread again, with buoyant steps,
My girlhood's sunny track.

But, in life's retrospect, I see
Full many a saddened scene,
For life has not been all a play,
On dear old Stratford Green;
We've drank, dear friend, its mingled cup,
Of sorrow and of joy,
Since I was but a sportive girl
You a free-hearted boy.

We both were blest with many friends,
How few are left alive!
The dearly loved have passed away,
And yet we still survive:
We still survive, and it may be
A year, perhaps a day,
When, like the loved ones gone before,
We too shall pass away.

God grant that, in life's parting hour,
Our toils and labors done,
We may go gently to our rest,
As sinks yon setting sun.

When we were young, were stirring times,
The age of iron men,
Who rung the trumpet's warlike shout,
From every hill and glen :

Who stood for country and for home,
For liberty and life ;
' *God and the right,*' their battle-cry,
They conquered in the strife,
'Tis true, we were but children then,
But we remember well,
How many a heart was desolate,
How many a patriot fell.

For oft, the parent on his knee,
Would seat his lisping child,
And tell strange tales of battle scenes,
And legends stern and wild ;
And oft our childish cheeks were blanch'd,
And childish tears would flow,
As wonderingly we listened then,
To deeds of blood and woe.

But joy best suits the youthful heart,
Its pulse is light and free,
And so, as it has ever been,
It was with you and me,
And still your boyhood's sports went on,
My girlhood's laughter rung,
For, in those days of sternest deeds,
Both you and I were young.

Do you remember, dear old friend,
The simple village school,
Where Mr. Ayres taught little folks
To read and write by rule?
Children were timid, teachers stern,
In those our youthful days,
When, copy-book in hand, we went,
Trembling, to seek his praise.

And, when you won the wished-for boon,
And I stood sadly by,
You often caused a ray of hope
To light my downcast eye,
No matter what the teacher said,
Fresh from your generous breast,
Came to my ear the flattering words,
That mine was always best.

Do you remember that I sent
You, then, a Valentine?
Fine sentiment, perhaps, it lacked,
But love breathed in each line,
It seems but yesterday, these five
And seventy years ago;
You then had owned no other belle,
And I no other beau.

I, in return, a ribbon got,
Bright with true love's own hue,
And much it pleased my girlish taste,
For 'twas the bonniest blue,

But, childhood quickly passed away,
And hearts were lost and won,
And you soon owned another love,
And I, another John.

With him, I journeyed many a year,
Happy and blest were we,
He lived to see his bairnies' bairns
Prattling upon his knee,
We climbed 'thegither up the hill,'
But, down alone I go,
And soon, 'thegither at its foot,'
With him I'll lay me low.

Yet, not alone, for loving hearts,
Are left in children dear,
Who, in my downward path of life,
Smooth each declining year,
And oft, to glad my aged eye,
My children's children come,
And merry laughter rings again,
In my old happy home.

For you, sole mate of earliest days,
I've cast a backward eye,
Along the changing track of time,
As swift it hurried by;
And forward may we dare to look?
Another opening year
Hath dawned upon us, and its close
May scarcely find us here.

One may be taken, one be left,
It may be I, or you,
Still, while we live, dear, early friend,
Shall live our friendship true;
My years now number eighty-eight,
And yours are eighty-nine,
Yet, once more, as in days of yore,
Accept my Valentine."

CHAPTER VIII.

Patriotic Recollections.

“The brave, great spirits who went down like suns,
And left upon the mountain-tops of death,
A light that made them lovely.”

A. SMITH.

WHAT chronology is to history, are dates to the memories of actual life. They give adhesiveness and force to impressions that might else be desultory, and perishable.

What mathematics are to the *mind*, they may also be to the *heart*, adding stability and power to its better sentiments and affections. Sweet and salutary is it to review the varied events of God's providence, with regard to ourselves or others, on the return of their respective anniversaries. By thus deepening the imagery, and refreshing the colors on our moving diorama,

we may renew a grateful sense of His goodness, perhaps make more permanent the benefits of His discipline.

National anniversaries give fervor to the patriotism of a people. I have seen the whole heart of England stirred up on the fifth of November, from the white-robed priest, and the chanting choir in the cathedrals, to the merry urchins let loose from school, perchance, more inclined to laud than to denounce the "Gunpowder plot," that had given them a holiday. Yet a truer fellowship and stronger nationality sprang from this general sympathy of gratulation.

The birth of our own country, so peculiar in itself, and so fraught with blessings to her children, should be warmly and reverently regarded. That event might be so embalmed and brought forward year by year, as to perpetuate the blessings which first flowed from it.

The fourth of July, 1776, is a date that every American remembers, from the snows of Minnesota, to the Floridian orange-groves, from the

sounding shores of the Atlantic, to the new found realm of gold. A wanderer perchance, on Chimborazo, or in the Eternal City, or among the tropic isles, or daring, with frost-bound sails, the ices of the Arctic zone, he bares his head at his country's birth-day, and his heart quickens with their proud joy, who of old exclaimed, "*I am a Roman citizen.*" So may it ever be, while God shall hold in his protecting hand, our hallowed Union.

An aged friend, whose birth was on the consecrated fourth of July, 1776, never failed till the close of life to rejoice in that circumstance, as a heritage of glory. That this anniversary should have been marked by the transition to another world, of two of the venerable signers of our Declaration of Independence, each dignified by the highest office in our country's power to bestow, adds a mystic sacredness to its historic interest.

John Adams, whose far-reaching mind saw the incipient rights of his native land, when in the chrysalis of her colonial state, she herself understood them not,—who with boldness and

enthusiasm, unfolded and demanded them,—to whom, next to Washington, she first accorded the honor of her chief magistracy, lay at the age of ninety, on his dying couch, at his fair, paternal estate in Quincy, (Mass.,) where he first drew breath, surrounded by objects of his fondest love.

It was a holy sight
To look upon that venerable man,
Remembering all his honors, all his toils,
And knowing that his earth-receding grasp,
Was on the anchor of eternal life.

It was the fourth of July, 1826. Raising his head from the pillow, the last brightness gathering in his eye, he said, "*It is the glorious Fourth.* God bless it. God bless you all. This is a great and glorious day."

And so, he resigned his spirit.

On the same day, Thomas Jefferson, his friend and compeer in toils and counsels for a nation's liberty, the third President of these United States, at his Virginian home of Monticello, which he had beautified by taste and hospitality, received, while still lightly bearing the

burden of eighty-three years, that guest who cometh but once to the children of men. It was his fearless pen, rich in varied literature, that drafted our Declaration of Independence :

Forth from that pen of might,
 Burst the immortal scroll,
 Which gave a living soul
 To shapeless clay ;
 Which said, " Let there be light,"
 And the old startled realms beheld a new-born day.

John Adams, among his latest words, had said, "*Jefferson survives.*" Yet almost at the same hour of the day that completed the fiftieth year of that nation's life, the beating of whose infant pulse they had counted and registered, both those great men expired. As Solon shrouded his head and departed, that the mystery of his absence might add efficacy to the laws he had established for Athens, they gave to their country's first jubilee, that last solemn seal which death sets on love and patriotism.

The twenty-second of February, the birth-

day of Washington, should be regarded with demonstrations of national enthusiasm and gratitude. Especially should they who stand nearest in proximity to those tempestuous times which his wisdom helped to change into the broad sunlight of freedom, speak of the virtues of that king of men, to all in the forming period of life. Not as a warrior, would we chiefly commend him; that was indeed a prominent exigence to which he was called by Heaven, and in which he conducted nobly, but we press on the imitation of those who are to come after us, his disinterested patriotism, his patience in adversity, his unswerving truth, his wisdom in the greatest matters, his just attention to the smallest, the punctuality of his dealings with all men, the godlike dignity, the serene, unostentatious piety, which made a more perfect balance of character than has appertained to any hero in any age.

Another approach to a remarkable coincidence of dates, is the death of the venerable John Quincy Adams, on the completion of half a century from that of the "Pater Patriæ," and

also within a single day of the anniversary of his birth. He was himself the sixth President of the United States, and the son of the second who had sustained that honor. Though he had surpassed the age of fourscore, he still kept his seat among the representatives of our nation, at Washington, watching with keen eye and unimpaired intellect, whatever concerned her vitality or renown. It was on the morning of February 21st, 1848, that he appeared in the lofty halls of Congress, with his usual vigor, and gave in a clear, emphatic voice, his vote on the opening question.

Suddenly there was a cry, "*Mr. Adams is dying!*" Throngs rushed to the side of that "old man eloquent," and bore him fainting to a sofa in an inner apartment. Partially recovering from insensibility, he said slowly, "*This is all of earth. I am content.*"—Repeating the assurance of his calmness and preparation, he relapsed into silent repose, until the evening of the twenty-third, when the country whom he had so long served, mourned at the tidings that he was no more.

Thus fell nobly at his post, and in the manner that his patriot heart might have chosen, this man of stainless integrity, of universal acquirements, of diplomatic training from early boyhood,—and one of the few in whom precocity of talent continues to advance through the whole of life, and to ripen amid the frosts of age.

But not in the splendor of the fame of statesmen or chieftains, would we lose the memory of others, who, in humbler stations, gathered firmly around the endangered cradle of our common country. Some of these were our own sires. By the hearth-stone, they have told our listening infancy, of toils and perils, bravely and cheerfully borne. It becomes us to impress them on our children, who amid the luxurious indulgences of a great and prosperous land, can scarcely conceive the hardships and dangers by which its freedom was wrought out.

Standing as we do, literally as well as politically, on the “isthmus of a middle state,” it seems incumbent on us to deliver unimpaired

to a future age, such records as the Past may have entrusted to our care. The liberty which was enkindled upon our own altars, amid blast and tempest, should be guarded as a vestal flame. The voice of the actors in those "times that tried men's souls," speaks through us. Let us strive that it may enkindle pure love in the hearts of the young, to that native land, which, though it has indeed gained a proud seat among the nations, has still the same need of protection from their virtues, that it once had from their fathers' swords.

The patriotism which we would fain cherish, by keeping in life and freshness the events of our earlier history, struck deep and true root in the hearts of the softer sex, amid the storms of revolution. The privations which they contentedly and bravely endured, should not be forgotten. In many a lowly home, from whence the father was long sundered by a soldier's destiny, Woman stifled the sigh of her own hardships, that she might by her firmness, breathe new strength into her husband's heart, and be

“An undergoing spirit, to bear up
Against whate'er ensued.”

How often, during that long war, did the mother labor to perform to her little ones, both the father's duties, and her own, having no refuge in her desolate estate, and unresting anxiety, save the Hearer of Prayer.

I have often reflected on a simple narration, once given me by a good and hoary-headed man, the Rev. Dr. David Smith, of Durham, Conn., who with unimpaired intellect, and cheerful piety, has passed several years the bounds of fourscore.

“My father was in the army, during the whole eight years of the Revolutionary war, at first as a common soldier, afterward as an officer. My mother had the sole charge of us, four little ones. Our house was a poor one, and far from neighbors. I have a keen remembrance of the terrible cold of some of those winters. The snow lay so deep and long, that it was difficult to cut or draw fuel from the woods, or to get our corn to mill, when we had any. My mother was the possessor of a coffee-mill. In that she ground wheat, and made coarse bread which we ate and were thankful. It was not always, that we could be allowed as much even of this, as our keen appetites craved. Many is the time that we have gone to bed with only a drink of water

for our supper, in which a little molasses had been mingled. We patiently received it, for we knew our mother did as well for us as she could, and hoped to have something better in the morning. She was never heard to repine, and young as we were, we tried to make her lovely spirit and heavenly trust, our example. When my father was permitted to come home, his stay was short, and he had not much to leave us, for the pay of those who had achieved our liberties, was slight, and irregularly rendered. Yet when he went, my mother ever bade him farewell with a cheerful face, and not to be anxious about his children, for she would watch over them night and day, and God would take care of the families of those who went forth to defend the righteous cause of their country. Sometimes we wondered that she did not mention the cold weather, or our short meals, or her hard work, that we little ones might be clothed, and fed, and taught. But she would not weaken his hands, or sadden his heart, for she said a soldier's lot was harder than all. We saw that she never complained, but always kept in her heart, a sweet hope, like a well of living water. Every night ere we slept, and every morning when we arose, we lifted our little hands for God's blessing on our absent father and our endangered country."

The principal events in the history of our native land, arranged according to their dates, would be profitable to us, both as a review, and as an exercise of memory. Thus might we with more variety and freshness, impart to the young, that which they so well gather from

books, details of the self-sacrifice, the courage and the piety which God recompensed with the life and liberty of a nation. Thus, might we perchance, lift a barrier, slight, yet not powerless, against venality and luxury and ambition, those banes of a republic, arrogantly polluting the pure sources of patriot health.

The diligent formation, and regular reference to a daily list of dates founded on universal history, is a salutary habit. Every day in the year, has, doubtless, more than one feature of distinction, "if men would carefully distil it out." Though not an histore fact of importance, it might probably bear the record of the birth or death of some individual whose biography it would be pleasant to review, or impress on others. For if an ancient writer has truly said, that "the moral beauty on which we fix our eyes, presses its own form upon our hearts, making them fair and lovely with the qualities that they behold," the lives of the great and good must be a profitable contemplation for plastic youth.

Hints derived from our daily list of anniver-

saries, with some tact in avoiding prolixity, might be rendered valuable to the young who surround us. Let us hazard any aspersion of pedantry that might chance to flow from it. Ridicule of that sort, should be pointless to us. If through adduced illustration or example, we may be made the medium of implanting some great truth or holy precept, which shall bear fruit for our country after we are dead, let us neither shrink or loiter ; for the time is short.

The people who have past their prime, have reason to rejoice that so many of their own immediate band have been enabled to leave such enduring traces on the sands of time, If the satisfactions of rural life, the transmutation of the unsightly mould into fruits and flowers, are so soothing and salutary, is it not a privilege to plant in the region where we were ourselves reared, trees, whose “leaves are for the healing of the nations?” If the founding of those time-honored edifices,—the pyramid, the obelisk, and the temple, on which the storms of ages have beaten in vain, are inquired for with earnestness, should not higher

honor be theirs, who have been enabled to erect for liberty and law, columns on whose Corinthian capital, lingers the smile of heaven, as a never-setting sun?

CHAPTER IX.

Accomplishments.

If a diamond was ours, at the opening of day,
Because it is eve, shall we cast it away?

ACCOMPLISHMENTS *for old people?* Yes. And why not? It would seem as if the world thought they had no right to them. Whereas, having been obliged to part with many personal attractions, there is the more need that they should take pains to make themselves agreeable.

Every other period of life has its peculiar prospect of improvement, and its prescribed modes of promoting it. What care is expended to teach childhood the theory of language. Through ignorance, grammatical error, and sol-ecism, it steadily advances, nothing daunted,

or discouraged. What efforts are put forth to induce the young to make the most of any attainment they may possess, and strenuously to acquire those in which they are deficient. And this is right. Maturity has its beautiful occupations, its hallowed responsibilities, and an array of resistless motives to excel in each.

Nothing seems expected of the aged but to put themselves decently away into some dark corner, and complete the climax of the great poet, "second childishness, and mere oblivion." Let's see about that. Why not adopt the suggestion of another poet, to "*live while we live?*"

In looking about for some relief, or loophole through which to escape, forgive me, if I hint what at first view might seem trifling, the preservation of a cheerful countenance, and a neat, becoming costume. Inattention to these points is prone to mark those who feel themselves of little consequence in society, and the effect is to render them still more disregarded. "A merry countenance," said Jeremy Taylor, "is

one of those good things which no enemy or persecutor can take away from me.”

On the subject of apparel, whose importance, ladies may, at least, be ready to admit, Madam Hancock, the dignified consort of the President of our First Congress, used to say, “I can never forgive any person in good society for not being well dressed, or for thinking of themselves after they are dressed.” To a very advanced age, she was herself, a fine illustration of her theory.

The stimulant of example, also, as well as of precept, is strenuously brought to bear upon the young, in their different departments of study and accomplishment. For instance, in the science of music, requiring the daily, laborious practice of years, emulation is continually exerted. More than one fair aspirant has cheered her long session at the piano, by recalling what was said of the captivating Ann Boleyn, that “when she composed her hands to play, and her voice to sing, it was joined with such sweetness of countenance that *three* harmonies concurred.”

What a striking picture! Though waning years may preclude from this combination of three harmonies, yet be it known to all whom it may concern, that there have been old people who retained, and even made progress in what the world styles accomplishments. I have had the honor of being acquainted with ladies, who after the age of eighty, excelled in the various uses of the needle, executing embroidery by the evening lamp, and sitting so erect, that younger persons, more addicted to languid positions, asserted that "it made their shoulders ache to look at them." I am in possession of various articles, both useful and ornamental, wrought by the hands of such venerable friends, and doubly precious for their sakes,

The widow of our great statesman, Alexander Hamilton, with many other feminine accomplishments, exhibited to a great age, the exquisite uses of the needle, and continued to be admired for the ease and courtesy with which she entertained her numerous guests, during a life which almost comprised a century.

Mrs. Madison was distinguished, not only

while in the presidential mansion, where she won the heart of every visitant, but throughout a long life, by one of the most kindly and queenly natures that ever belonged to woman. So fully developed and unchangeably sustained were her social powers, and brilliance of conversation, that after the age of eighty, I have often heard her in the large assemblages at the court of our nation, address to every person some appropriate remark, or touch some train of familiar thought, that would make the embarrassed at ease, or the happy, happier. She was unwilling, even for hours, to indulge in the repose of a seat, lest some one should escape her notice, whom she might cheer, or gratify. Especially, when children were present, she never forgot or overlooked the youngest, but with admirable tact had something to say, which they might take with them as a pleasant memory onward to future years.

In the high and rare attainment of elegant reading, I have never known any lady so conspicuous to advanced age, as the mother of the late Bishop Wainwright. Her distinct articu-

lation, and perfect emphasis, made listening a pleasure, and drew out the full beauty of the thought which they rendered vocal. To her also, belongs the high praise of having formed, in early boyhood, the habits and style of elocution, of her distinguished and lamented son.

Many precious pictures have I, in that niche of memory's gallery, where the hoar-frost sparkles. One of these, I must indulge myself in transferring. It is entwined with the scenery of my own native place. I see again, a tall, dignified lady, whose elastic step, age failed to chain. High intellect was hers, the stronger for being self-taught, and a place among the aristocracy, that she might the more plainly show the beauty of gentle manners and a lowly heart. In the varieties of conversation, which, without pedantry or display, unveil extensive learning and suggestive thought, I have never known any of my own sex, her superior; I was about to have said, her equal. Fabrics of use and of taste, she wrought and ornamented, and with her delicate scissors, imitated the beauties and wonders of the animal

and floral world. Children, she especially charmed by these efforts of her skill, as well as by her great descriptive powers, ever keeping in view their instruction as well as pleasure. Clustering around, they listened, holding their breath, lest they should lose a word. She also delighted them with the sweetness of her ancient and sacred songs, for to the verge of fourscore and ten, her musical powers remained, a source of wondering gratification to all around. Even now, those swan-like melodies that enchanted my earliest years, revisit me, rich, clear, and softened by the lapse of years, as if borne over untroubled waters.

The time would fail me to tell of her excellent knowledge in all that appertained to the domestic sphere; as it also would to mention other ladies in my own New England, who in the delicate elements of that great feminine attainment, good housekeeping, yielded neither energy or skill to the frost of seventy years, but dexterously continued to touch every clock-work spring, on which the order and comfort of a blessed home depend.

It would be quite impossible here to enumerate, those of the other sex whom it has been my privilege to know, who in their various departments and professions, derived added dignity from age; merchants, whose mental acuteness time seemed to have refined; physicians, whose large experience gave such confidence to the sick as to prove an element of healing; jurists, whose time-tried judgments were as beaten gold; divines, whose silver locks were a talisman to the hearts of their hearers; statesmen, whose eloquence was never more fervid or vigorous than when their sun went down.

A gentleman, whose period of collegiate education had been cut short by the absorbing toils of a life at sea, having found in advanced age a haven of repose, resumed with zeal, the perusal of the classics, remarking, that after fourscore he had been led decidedly to prefer them to his native tongue, which was "so easy as not to keep the mind awake." I have often found him deeply engaged over the pages of Homer, or Cicero, in the original, his eye brightening at every gem of genius, and his

florid complexion pure with temperance, reminding one of Miss Mitford's description of the beauty of her own venerable father.

A genius for the fine arts, we sometimes see evolved, at a late period of life. This has been the case with the adopted son of Washington, George W. P. Custis, Esq., who since the age of seventy, has executed a series of large historical paintings, representing prominent scenes in our Revolution, and presenting in various attitudes, the Pater Patriæ, with the warmth of a filial pencil. This elevated, self-taught accomplishment, is associated with one of earlier acquisition, that of music; and the stirring melodies of other times, which occasionally echo through the lofty halls of Arlington, from the violin of their master, betray no indication that the frosts of fourscore have already settled upon his temples.

The efforts that sustain social intercourse, and the attractions that adorn it, are in our Republic, too soon laid aside. Of these, the gray-haired seem in haste to absolve themselves, as of a sin. In France, they are kept in con-

stant and prosperous exercise. The idea of being superannuated, seems not there to have entered the mind of the people. The aged are received in mixed society, as marked favorites, and bear their part with an inextinguishable naivettè. Many instances of this, I beheld, with admiring wonder. One evening, in particular, I recollect being interested in watching Isabey, the celebrated miniature painter, of Paris, who, with hair like the driven snow, glided through the mazes of the dance, at a state ball given by the elegant Marchioness Lavalete, the agility of his movements not at all impaired by more than eighty years, nor the graceful courtesy with which he delighted to introduce and bring into notice, his fair, young wife, while frequent allusions to their home, proved how affectionately their hearts turned thither amid all the gaieties of fashion.

Yet it is not in mercurial France alone, that men "frisk beneath the burden of fourscore." The philosophic Socrates, though not, indeed, at quite so ripe an age, used to dance, and play upon the lyre; one, to preserve his physical

vigor, and the other to tune and elevate his mind with cheerfulness.

Macklin, after he had numbered a full century, appeared on the stage, and in the character of the Jew, Shylock, held his audience in absorbed attention. He also successfully occupied himself in revising and remodelling his own dramatic compositions.

It will be said that these instances are exceptions, rather than examples that we may hope to reach. Of some, this is true; but from others we derive encouragement and hope. If at the age of eighty, Cato thought proper to go to school to learn Greek, why should we not consider ourselves scholars, as long as aught remains to be learned? Yes, life is ever a school, both in its discipline and its aspirations. Let us take our places in that class, who both learn and teach. We will speak of the manifold goodness of God, which we have so long tested, and strike that keystone of praise, whose melody will be perfected in Heaven:—

“ Yet oh ! eternity’s too short,
To utter all His praise.”

Among the highest accomplishments of age, are its dispositions. It should daily cultivate the spirit to admire what is beautiful, to love what is good, and to be lenient to the faults of that infirm nature of which all are partakers. As sensual pleasures lose their hold, the character should become more sublimated. While we would avoid that fixedness which repels new impressions, and resists improvements as innovations, let us seek the accomplishment of an active, unslumbering benevolence.

Dear friends, whom I love better for the linked sympathies of many years, do something to be remembered when you are gone. Let your words, either spoken or written, bring forth fruit when you are dead. Endow a school. Open a fountain. Plant a tree. Put a good book in a cottage, or a public library. It was a beautiful reply of a white-haired man, to the question why he should trouble himself to be setting out a pear-tree, who could scarcely hope to taste its fruits, "Have I all my life long, eaten from trees that the dead have planted, and shall not the living eat of mine?"

Let us hold to the spirit of progress, and the capabilities of improvement of this immortal nature, as long as it sojourns in the flesh. "There is no reason," said a clear-minded philosopher, "why we should not make advances, as long as we are in a state of probation."

If our pilgrimage is almost finished, does that create a need to forfeit our admiration, or relax our pursuit of "whatsoever is fair, lovely, or of good report?" "Excelsior," may as well be our motto, at the close, as at the commencement of life's journey.

If we are indeed, so near the Better Land, as to catch the whispers of its camp, hear we not, in a great voice, as of many harpers, the inspiring strain, "Forgetting the things that are behind, reach forth unto those that are before!" and is there not in our own hearts, an answering chant, as of antiphonal music, "Not as though we had attained, or were already perfect. But we follow after."

CHAPTER X.

The Privileges of Age.

“ Say ye, who through the round of eighty years
Have prov'd life's joys and sorrows, hopes and fears,
Say, is there not enough to meekness given,
Of light from reason's lamp, and light from Heaven,
To teach us where to follow, what to shun,
Or bow the head and say, God's righteous will be done ?”

MRS. BARBAULD.

THE motto here selected, was composed by the venerable author, after she had passed the bounds of fourscore. In her well regulated mind there was no disposition to disparage the comforts that linger around the later stages of human life. Why should this disposition ever be tolerated? Many enjoyments have, indeed, run their course; their lease having expired by limitation of time. Yet others remain, the

birth-right of advanced years, which it is both unjust and unwise, not to appreciate.

We have spoken of the *privileges of age*. Has it in reality, any inherent honors, emoluments, or immunities, to justify such an assumption?

Originally, it was in possession of a charter, sanctioned by divine authority, demanding reverence for the hoary head, and for the counsel of those to whom years had given wisdom. Modern times have indeed modified this charter. Our own republic has been pronounced by observant foreigners, deficient in the sentiment of respect. Still, among well-trained and noble natures, there will be ever a willingness to honor those who have long and well borne the burdens of time, and a veneration for the "hoary head, if found in the way of righteousness."

The inquirer, if age has any emolument, may be reminded of the wealth of experience. Are not the whole beautiful, ever-moving world of the young, in poverty for the want of it? searching, trying, tasting, snatching at garlands

and grasping thorns, chasing meteors, embarking on fathomless tides, and in danger of being swallowed up by quicksands? The aged, through toil and hazard, through the misery of mistake, or the pains of penitence, have won it. Safe in their casket, are gems polished by long attrition, and gold dust, well washed, perchance, in fountains of tears."

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, for it bears a laden
breast,
Still, with sage experience moving, toward the brightness of the
west."

Has age immunities? Its sources of revenue seem to be negative rather than positive. It has probably dissolved partnership with personal vanity. And was not that a losing concern? There remains no consciousness of beauty, no feverish hope of admiration, no undue excitement of competition, no bewilderment from flattery, to put out of sight higher purposes, or exclude more rational pleasures, The consequent gain, both of leisure and quiet must be great. Has it not also a respite from

the toils of money-getting, from that science of accumulation which is but practical slavery? It is surely time. Having borne the yoke for many years, rising early, and late taking rest, and eating the bread of carefulness, it would be desirable to taste the sweets of such enfranchisement, while yet "the lamp holds out to burn."

In age, is not the over-mastering force of the passions broken? Is it as irascible at opposition as when the current of life rushed fiercely on, battling all obstacles with the impetuosity of a cataract? Is it still led in blind and deep captivity as of yore, by

"Love, Hope and Joy, fair Pleasure's syren train,
Hate, Fear and Grief, the family of Pain?"

If a more serene and self-sustained philosophy is a natural concomitant of age, is it not a privilege for which to give thanks?

Yet not in exemptions alone, do the advantages of the aged consist. Have they not more aid, and stronger promptings to disinterestedness, than in the earlier stages of their journey?

The young acquire accomplishments, that they may be distinguished, or admired; the old strive to continue agreeable, that they may please or edify others. The man of mature years toils to achieve wealth, as a means of influence; the study of the old is, or should be, how to dispense it. Their business is to shower back upon the earth, the gifts she has bestowed, having no further expectation from her, save of a couch in her bosom.

Since those who have the slightest admixture of self, escape countless discomforts by which others are annoyed, the aged are assisted by their condition, to find that happiness which is more independent of "things that perish in the using."

"That which they are, they are,
Made weak by time, perchance, but strong in will,
To strive, to seek, to grasp, and not to yield."

If to compensate for the visible losses of time, there are correspondent gains, less obvious, but still secure, it concerns all to understand their amount, that they may be able to

balance the books, ere the Master calleth for an account of their stewardship. An ancient classic has well remarked, that Nature, after having wisely distributed to all the preceding portions of life, their peculiar and proper enjoyments, can scarcely be supposed to have neglected, like an indolent poet, the last act of the human drama, and left it destitute of suitable advantages.

The God of nature has decreed to every season of life, its inherent happiness, and fitness for the end it was intended to serve. In spring, fair blossoms glow even among the grass-blades, and in summer, the fruit-laden boughs are clothed with beauty. Vigorous autumn comes with his reaping-hook, and wintry age awaiteth the Lord of the harvest. Not unmindful of its privileges, or reluctant to restore the mysterious gift of life, should it watch for his coming.

Age should clothe itself with love, to resist the loneliness of its lot. Yet it sometimes cherishes a morbid and mistaken consciousness that it no longer retains the power of concilia-

ting affection. It has been beautifully said that "the heart is as warm after life's day's-work is over, as when it began; after the harness of manhood is cast off, as before it was put on. The love generally felt for genial and kindly old persons, with their unselfish sympathies, their tried judgment, and their half mournful tenderness toward those they are soon to leave, has not been enough remembered in poetry. Their calm, reliable affection, is like the Indian summer of friendship."

The aged, especially if their conquest of self is imperfect, are prone to under-rate the advantages that remain. Their minds linger among depressing subjects, repining for what "time's effacing fingers" will never restore. Far better would it be to muse on their remaining privileges, to recount them, and to rejoice in them. Many instances have I witnessed, both of this spirit, and the want of it, which left enduring impressions.

I well remember an ancient dwelling, sheltered by lofty, umbrageous trees, and with all the appendages of rural comfort. A fair pros-

pect of hill and dale, and broad river, and distant spire, cheered the vine-covered piazzas, through whose loop-holes, with the subdued cry of the steam-borne cars, the world's great Babel made a dash at the picture without coming too near. Traits of agricultural life, divested of its rude and sordid toils, were pleasantly visible. A smooth-coated, and symmetrical cow, ruminated over her clover-meal. A faithful horse, submissive to the gentlest rein, protruded his honest face through the barn window. A few brooding mothers, were busy with the nurture of their chickens, while the proud father of the flock, told with a clarion-voice, his happiness. There were trees, whose summer fruits were richly swelling, and bushes of ripening berries, and gardens of choice vegetables. Those who from the hot and dusty city, came to breathe the pure air of this sylvan retreat, took note of these "creature-comforts," and thought they added beauty to the landscape.

Within the abode, fair pictures and books of no mean literature adorned the parlors ; in the

carpeted kitchen, ticked the stately old family clock, while the bright dishes stood in orderly array upon the speckless shelves. Visitants could not but admire that union of taste and education, which makes rural life beautiful. It might seem almost as an Elysium, where care would delight to repose, or philosophy to pursue her researches without interruption. But to any such remark, the excellent owner was wont mournfully to reply,

“Here are only two old people together. Our children are married and gone. Some of them are dead. We cannot be expected to have much enjoyment.”

Oh, dear friends, but it is expected that you should. Your very statement of the premises, is an admission of peculiar sources of comfort.

“*Two old people together.*” Whose sympathies can be so perfect? And is not sympathy a source of happiness? Side by side ye have journeyed through joys and sorrows. You have stood by the grave’s brink, when it swallowed up your idols, and the iron that entered into your souls was fused as a living link, that

time might never destroy. Under the cloud, and through the sea, you have walked hand in hand, heart to heart. What subjects of communion must you have, with which no other human being could intermeddle.

“*Two old people.*” Would your experience be so rich and profound, if you were not old? or your congeniality so entire, if one was old, and the other young? What a blessing that you can say, there are *two* of us. Can you realize the loneliness of soul that must gather around the words, “*left alone!*” How many of memory’s cherished pictures must then be viewed through blinding tears? how feelingly the expression of the poet adopted, “ ’tis the survivor dies?”

“*Our children are married and gone.*” Would you have it otherwise? Was it not fitting for them to comply with the institution of their Creator? Is it not better than if they were all at home, without congenial employment, pining in disappointed hope, or solitude of the heart? *Married and gone!* To teach in other homes, the virtues they

have learned from you. Perchance, in newer settlements to diffuse the energy of right habits, and the high influence of pure principles. *Gone!* to learn the luxury of life's most intense affections, and wisely to train their own young blossoms, for time and for eternity. Praise God that it is so.

“*Some are dead,*” They have gone a little before. They have shown you the way through that gate where all the living must pass. Will not their voice of welcome be sweet in the skies? Dream ye not sometimes that ye hear the echo of their harp-strings? Is not your eternal home brought nearer, and made dearer by them. *Praise God.*

Several cottage homes, have I been lately favored in seeing, where age delightfully reposes. Two of them especially, dwell in memory, as pictures not easily forgotten.—One in a retired part of the most admired city of Connecticut, united every appliance of comfort, with elegance and refinement. There dwelt the saintly sage of more than ninety, looking calmly back upon a well-spent life, enlivened by

the animation and cheerfulness of his companion, who, though only a few years younger, retained in a remarkable degree, the attractions of manner and person, which had fascinated his youth. So near their cultured grounds, that intercourse through the windows might be permitted, rose like a tutelary genius, the loftier mansion of their children, attentive to every wish and movement of the blessed parents, and anxious to accord the same protection and happiness, which they had themselves received, when life was new. This union of filial piety, with the calm enjoyment of honored age, gave a charm to this beautiful cottage, which made the heart thankful for the privilege of beholding it.

The other, in one of our most thriving, rural townships, was bright with the roses of June. The aged pair who occupied it, were considerably past fourscore, and happy to resign the more exciting cares of a city residence, for the quiet of the simple abode, and beautiful garden, which their own skill and health enabled them to cultivate. Not ambitious were

they of wealth, but rich in the recollections of active and virtuous years, social, courteous, religiously satisfied with this fair world and its Maker.

Methought the mildness of such a sunset, was more beautiful, than the uncertain brilliance of life's morning. One feels better for such a visit, and for the sight of such people. Looking upon the inhabitants of these two peaceful abodes, I was reminded of that fine passage from Mountford.

“Old age is a public good. It is indeed. Don't feel sad, because you are old. Whenever you are walking, no one ever opens a gate for you to pass through, no one ever honors you with any kind of help, without being himself the better for what he does, for fellow feeling with the aged, ripens the soul.”

I once knew an aged couple, who for more than sixty years had dwelt in one home, and with one heart. Wealth was not theirs, nor the appliances of luxury, yet the plain house in which they had so long lived, was their own. Humble in every appointment, that they might keep free from debt, they were respected by people in the highest positions, for it was felt

that they set a right example in all things. Every little gift, or token of remembrance from friends, and all who knew them were friends, awakened the fresh warmth of gratitude. Though their portion of this world's goods was small, benevolence being inherent in their nature, found frequent expression. Always they had by them, some book of slight expense, but of intrinsic value, to be given as a guide to the young, the ignorant or the tempted. Cordials also, and simple medicines for debility, or incipient disease, they distributed to the poor, for they were skillful in extracting the spirit of health from herbs, and a part of the garden cultivated by their own hands, was a dispensary. Kind, loving words had they for all, the fullness of their heart's content, brimming over in bright drops, to refresh those around.

That venerable old man, and vigorous, his temples slightly silvered, when more than fourscore years had visited them, how freely flowed forth the melody of his leading voice, amid the sacred strains of public worship. His

favorite tunes of Mear and Old Hundred, wedded to these simply sublime words,

“While shepherds watched their flocks by night,”

and

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,”

seem even now to fall sweetly, as they did upon my childish ear. These, and similar ancient harmonies, mingled with the devout prayers that morning and evening, hallowed his home and its comforts; she, the loved partner of his days, being often sole auditor. Thus, in one censer, rose the praise, which every day seemed to deepen. God's goodness palled not on their spirits, because it had been long continued. They rejoiced that it was “new every morning, and fresh every moment.”

By the clear, wood-fire in winter, sate the aged wife, with serene brow, skillfully busy in preparation or repair of garments, as perfect neatness and economy dictated; while by the evening lamp, her bright knitting-needles

moved with quickened zeal, as she remembered the poor child, or wasted invalid, in some cold apartment, for whom they were to furnish a substantial covering.

In the later years of life, their childless abode was cheered by the presence of a young orphan relative. She grew under their shadow with great delight, conforming her pliant heart to their wishes, and to the pattern of their godly simplicity. When they were seated together, she read to them such books as they chose, and treasured their Christian counsel. Her voice in the morning, was as the carol of the lark, and they seemed to live again a new life in her young life. She was to them "like the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley."

Love for the sweet helplessness of unfolding years, seemed to increase with their own advancing age. Little children, who know by instinct where love is, would draw near them, and stand lamb-like at their side. Thus they passed on, until more than ninety years had been numbered to them. They were not weary of themselves, or of each other, or of

this beautiful world. Neither was Time weary of bringing them, letter by letter, the full alphabet of a serene happiness, and when extreme age added the Omega, they were well educated to begin the bliss of Eternity.

CHAPTER XI.

Longevity and Intellectual Labor.

“Their age was like a second winter,
Frosty, but kindly.”

SHAKSPEARE.

AN opinion has been expressed that literary labors, or habitual excursions into the regions of imagination, are adverse to the continuance of health, or even the integrity of intellect. Grave charges, truly! and examples to the contrary, may be easily adduced.

Premature death, and mental declension are confined to no profession or condition of life. Too early, or undue stress laid on the organs of the brain, is doubtless fraught with disastrous consequences. Still, their constant, and

even severe exercise, may comport both with physical welfare and longevity.

It is indeed, true, that Swift "expired a driveller and a show," but not until he had passed seven years beyond the span allotted to human life; and the amiable author of the "Task," closed his pilgrimage in a rayless cloud at sixty-six; and Walter Scott sank at sixty-one, under toils too ambitiously pursued, for the safe union of flesh with spirit; and Southey, whose reckless industry precluded needful rest, subsided ere sixty-eight, into syncope and the shadow of darkness; and Henry Kirke White faded at twenty-one, in the fresh blossom of his young renown; and Byron at thirty-six, rent the fiery armor of genius and of passion, and fled from the conflict of life.

Yet Goethe, unimpaired by the strong excitements of imagination, saw his eighty-second winter; and the sententious architect of the 'Night Thoughts,' numbered fourscore and four; and Voltaire, at the same period, was still in love with the vanity of fame; and Colly Cibber, for twenty-seven years poet laureate of England,

reached eighty-six ; and Corneille continued to enjoy his laurels till seventy-eight ; and Crabbe, at an equal age, resigned the pen which had sketched with daguerreotype minuteness the passing scene. Joseph Warton, until his seventy-ninth year, made his mental riches and cheerful piety sources of delight to all around him ; Charles Wesley, on the verge of eighty, called his wife to his dying pillow, and with an inexpressible smile, dictated his last metrical effusion ; and Klopstock, the bard of the "Messiah," continued until the same period to cheer and delight his friends. Isaac Watts, laid down his consecrated harp at seventy-four ; and our own Trumbull, the author of "McFingal," preserved till eighty-two, the bright, original intellect, whose strains had animated both camp and cottage. His friend, the distinguished Dwight, author of "Greenfield Hill," and for many years President of Yale College, died at sixty-four ; and Joel Barlow, ten years younger, found a foreign grave ; and the knell has not scarcely ceased, for Percival, another of our Connecticut poets, who laid down his varied

learning, and hermit life, at sixty-one. Philip Freneau continued his varied labors until his eightieth year; and Roger Wolcott, better known as a statesman, than as the writer of a volume of poems, published in colonial times, lived to be eighty-nine. The illustrious Metastasio detained the admiring ear of Italy, until eighty-four; and Milton, at sixty-six, opened his long eclipsed eyes on "cloudless light serene." Who, that now thrills, while reading the sublime strains of "Paradise Lost," can forbear to smile at the criticism of one of its cotemporaries, the celebrated Waller? "The old blind schoolmaster, John Milton, hath published a tedious poem on the fall of man; if its length be not considered as merit, it hath no other."

Mason was seventy-two, ere the "holy earth," where "dead Maria" slumbered, admitted him to share her repose; and the tender Petrarch, and the brave old John Dryden, told out fully their seventy years; and the ingenious La Fontaine, seventy-four; while Fontenelle, whose powers of sight and hearing extended their ministrations to the unusual term of

ninety-six years, lacked only the revolution of a few moons to complete his entire century; and Sadi, the poet of Persia, is said to have passed twenty years beyond it.

Those masters of the Grecian lyre, Anacreon, the sweet Sophocles, and the fiery souled Pindar, felt no frost of intellect, but were transplanted as evergreens, in the winter of fourscore; at the same advanced period, Wordsworth, in our own times, continued to mingle the music of his lay with the murmur of Rydal's falling water; and Joanna Baillie, to fold around her the robe of tragic power, enjoying until her ninetieth year, the friendship of the good, and the fruits of a fair renown; while Clotilde de Surville, the poetess of Languedoc, who flourished two or three centuries earlier, saw the autumnal vintage almost a hundred times. Montgomery, the religious poet, so long a cherished guest, amid the romantic scenery of Sheffield, enjoyed life with an unimpaired zest till eighty-two; and Rogers, long the most venerable poet in Europe, has within the last few months departed, at the age of

ninety-four. His first gift to the world, was the "Pleasures of Memory;" his last effusion, an epithalamium, to a friend. It was composed, or rather uttered, at Brighton, to whose salubrious waters he had resorted, for a short season, in his extreme age.

"Forth to the Altar,—and with her thou lov'st,
With her who longs to strew thy path with flowers,
Nor lose the blessed privilege to give
Birth to a race immortal as your own,
That trained by you, may make a heaven on earth,
And tread the path that leads from earth to heaven."

So much for the poets, who have been accused of burning out the wheels of life, in the flames of passion, and the vagaries of imagination; though according to the theory of one of their own number, "their thoughts make rich the blood of the world."

"The solace of song," says Southey, "certainly mitigates the suffering of the wounded spirit. I have sorrowed deeply, and found comfort in thus easing my mind; though much of what I wrote at such times, I have never let the world see."

True Poetry has surely an affinity with the higher harmonies of our being,—with religion and its joys. Gathering the beautiful from nature, and soaring into the realm of fancy for what reality withholds, she feeds her children on angels' food. She looks to the stars, and hears melodies that are above their courses.

Of wits and humorists, Cervantes fed on his own mirthful conceptions, to the verge of three-score and ten; and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, until two years beyond it, indulged her lively and capricious temperament; Mather Byles, who wrapped his bright fancies in verse as well as prose, reached his sixty-second year; and Sidney Smith at seventy-six, retained in a remarkable degree his intellectual keenness and originality.

Literary pursuits seem not to have been adverse to the happiness or longevity of females. Mrs. Hoffland and Miss Jane Porter, reached seventy-four, in dignity and honor; Mrs. Chaponne, seventy-five; Mrs. Piozzi, the biographer of Dr. Johnson, eighty-one; Miss Burney, eighty-eight; Mrs. Carter, eighty-nine; and

the venerated Hannah More, died only one year younger, having with indefatigable industry, composed eleven books, after she had numbered her sixtieth birthday. Mrs. Elizabeth Montague, and Mrs. Sherwood, lived to be eighty-one; and Mrs. Barbauld, to a more advanced age. Of the latter, it was said by Mrs. Mary L. Ware, who visited her in 1823, "Though now eighty-two, she possesses her faculties in full perfection; her manner is peculiarly gentle, her voice low and sweet, and she speaks of death with such firm hope, that I felt as if I were communing with a spiritual body."

Didactic and philosophical writers, seem often, in their calm researches, to have found refuge from that strife of thought which embitters or shortens existence.

Plato, wove for the men of Attica, his beautiful and sublime theories, to the age of eighty-one. At eighty-five, John Evelyn closed his eyes at his fair estate in Wotton, which he had embellished both as a naturalist and an author, engraving on his marble monument, as

the result of long experience, that "all is vanity which is not honest, and that there is no solid wisdom but in real piety." The diligent and acute Bentley, reached fourscore; and Walker, seventy-five; and Dr. Samuel Johnson, "whose name is a host," attained the same age, having with characteristic energy applied himself to the study of the Dutch language, but a short time before his death. Scaliger and Parkhurst fell only a few months short of threescore and ten; Ainsworth passed three years beyond it; Dr. Noah Webster, our own New England lexicographer, retained unimpaired until eighty-four, his physical and mental health, with the rich store of his varied attainments. Lindley Murray, at more than eighty, continued in the active duties of Christian philanthropy; and the philologist, Mitscherlich, the Nestor of the German schools, and uncle to the famous chemist of that name, died recently at Gottengen, at the age of ninety-three. One who visited Humboldt, after he had passed his eighty-sixth birthday, says, "this illustrious philosopher is still in the full enjoy-

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ment of bodily health and vigor, continuing as heretofore, to devote himself to the interests of science, with wonderful activity and perseverance," not having, it is asserted, in the last half-century, spent an idle hour. Sir Isaac Newton, as illustrious for Christian humility as for intellectual greatness, laid down his earthly honors at eighty-five; and Franklin, who in the words of Mirabeau, "stole the lightning from Heaven, and the sceptre from tyrants," cheered us with the mild radiance of his philanthropy till eighty-four; and Herschel rose above the stars, with which he had long communed, at eighty; while his sister, whom he had so kindly made the companion of his celestial intercourse, survived until ninety-eight. Yet it was not our intention to gather from the lists of science, its multiplied examples of ripe age and rare fame, but rather devote our prescribed limits to the affinities of literature with longevity.

The sympathies that spring from community of labor in the field of intellect, are salutary and graceful. Those minds that are above the

petty asperities of rivalship, have often thus enjoyed a friendship of singular depth and fervor. This seems to have been the case with many of the distinguished writers of England's Augustan age. Frequent association led to intimacy of plan and pursuit. They criticised each other's works, and in the attrition of kindred spirits, found that as "iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man, his friend." It has been finely said of Pope, that he "reverenced his equals in genius, and that of those friends who surpassed him, he spoke with respect and admiration." Of Gay it was asserted, by one of his literary associates, that "every body loved him." Even the witty and sarcastic Swift, shrank to open a letter which he feared might announce the fatal termination of a sickness that oppressed this friend. It lay long on his cabinet, unsealed, and was afterward endorsed by him, as communicating the mournful event of his "dear friend Gay's decease, received December 15th, but not read until five days after, by an impulse foreboding some misfortune." One would scarcely have

expected such sentimentality from the fierce-tempered Dean of St. Patrick's; but literary friendship softened him. The intellectual communion of Addison and Steele, cemented an interesting attachment; and the majestic old Johnson, though with less of mental congeniality for Goldsmith, still from affectionate regard excused his eccentricities, praised his talents, and rejoiced in his reputation.

This amiable and salubrious element of intellectual intercourse, is by no means confined to any particular age or country. In Germany, where native and noble impulse is the least fettered by conventionalism, in France, where genius and the labors of literature, open the gate of distinction more readily than a key of gold, and in our own land, where more than in any other, knowledge is the heritage and glory of the people, there are many examples of unity of heart between those, who in different departments, advance the great work of mental progress.

The poetic friendship of the Saxon mind has embalmed itself in the interwoven lines

and lives of Beaumont and Fletcher. The Lake Spirits, Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge, beautifully attested the brotherhood of genius, until the "threefold cord" was sundered at the tomb.

Much of this affectionate, generous sympathy between gifted minds, seemed to me still to exist in Great Britain, and though I was there too late to witness it in those most genial spirits, Sir Walter Scott, and Mrs. Hemans, its sweet revealings were manifested by Maria Edgeworth, and Joanna Baillie, as well as by many younger and distinguished authors, who still live to bless us.

May I be forgiven if I here add a little episode to please myself? an interview at Hampstead, which Memory cherishes among her pencil-sketches.

It was a brighter vernal day than often occurs under English skies, when I drove thither from London, to see Joanna Baillie. I found her seated on the sofa, in her pleasant parlor, surrounded by many pictures, herself to me, the most pleasant picture, of dignified and health-

ful age. On her cheek was somewhat more of color than usual, for she had just returned from a long walk among her poor pensioners, and the exercise, and the comfort of active benevolence, lent new life and expression to her smile. She was not handsome, at least, so the world said; her high cheek bones bespoke her Scottish extraction, and seventy-six years had absorbed any charm that youth might have bestowed. Yet to my eye she was beautiful. On the same sofa was her sister, Agnes, whom she so intensely loved, and to whom one of her sweetest poetical effusions was addressed. Though several years beyond fourscore, her complexion was singularly fair, her features symmetrical, and her demeanor graceful and attractive. Between them, was seated Rogers, the banker-poet, with locks like the driven snow, having come out several miles from his mansion in St. James' Park, to make them a friendly call. His smooth brow, and fresh flow of conversation, made it difficult to believe that this could be indeed, his eightieth spring. It seems he had been kindly advising the authoress of "Plays of the Passions," to

collect her fugitive poems, from their widespread channels, into the more enduring form of a volume. As she felt disinclined to the labor, he had himself undertaken and accomplished it, and was now discussing the success of the publication, and enjoying the high suffrages of criticism, as if they were his own. While their cheering, joyous tones, so pleasantly blended, and mental communion and service seemed to have given them new youth, or rather to have kept it perennial, I felt that the world could not furnish another such trio, and was grateful for the privilege of beholding it.

Even now, I imagine that I hear the voice of that venerable man, repeating with deliberate intonation and perfect emphasis, his favorite passage from Mrs. Barbould, who herself resided in the immediate vicinity, at Hampstead. It was written in extreme old age, but with unfaded vigor of intellect.

“ Life! we’ve been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather,
’Tis hard to part where friends are dear,
Perhaps ’twill cost both pang and tear :

So, steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time,
Say not good night, but in yon happier clime,
Bid me good morning."

The power of fine writing, sometimes remains unimpaired to the later evening of life. One of the most distinguished instances of this is found at the fair home of Sunny Side, on the banks of the noble Hudson. There Washington Irving, having planted the seventy-third milestone upon his journey of life, continues with much of the spirit, and external aspect of earlier years, to increase the number of his literary laurels. England vies with his native clime in doing him honor, while in this dignified retirement, respected by all who know him, he watches not inactively, the shadows that lengthen on his path. The pen which has won for him so illustrious a place in the annals of the world, is still a loved companion. His elaborate Biography of Washington is now in the progress of publication and none can trace in its pages, any mark of declension in vigor of conception, or genial beauty of style. Long

may he be enabled to add to his country's fame, and by an example of sunny age, to animate all who behold it.

At a still more advanced age, Professor Silliman, Senior, of Yale College, long the editor of the "American Journal of Science," has presented the public with two volumes, delineating a recent extensive tour in Europe. Compared with a similar work from his own pen, issued half a century before, this yields nothing of force, variety or brilliance. Possibly they have even the advantage over their predecessor. Their admixture of science, with the drapery of narrative, give them, as it were, bone and muscle, by which to stand erect, and move among the people.

Over their author, also, now in his seventy-eighth year, changeful time has had little power. His fine manly form is still unbowed, his unspectacled eyes, daunted by no obscurity of type or chirography, and his urbanity and hospitality in full exercise. A summer or two since, he returned unfatigued, from a journey to the Far West, of some four thousand miles,

enjoying, as keenly as ever, the varied scenery, adding to the cheerfulness of a large traveling party, and especially entering into the pleasures of the young, with a fresh, unclouded spirit. As recently as the last winter, he was induced to deliver a course of Lectures on Geology, at St. Louis, Missouri, regarding the distance, the season, and the toil, as no greater obstacles, than in early manhood.

The accomplishment of lecturing, which requires such a combination of talent is occasionally among the perquisites of age. Dr. Caldwell enumerates several striking instances.

“Dr. Shippen, he says, delivered after his seventieth year, some of the ablest and most instructive lectures I have ever heard from his chair.

Cullen was a splendid lecturer in the medical school of Edinburgh, at the age of eighty-three, and Monroe, the elder, was equally distinguished at about the same age. Boerhaave, when more than seventy, attracted to his lectures, crowds of pupils from all parts of Europe. Blumenback did the same from eighty-three to eighty-five; and Professor Hufeland, when upward of fourscore, was the pride of his profession in Berlin, a city scarcely inferior to any in science and letters.”

The popular lectures, that so agreeably diversify the winters in most of our cities, and

often attract such dense and delighted audiences, are sometimes uttered by men past their prime. Distinguished among these, is the Rev. John Pierpont, a poet as well as a scholar, and one of nature's noblemen; who in his seventy-first year, has delivered during the past season, his eightieth Lecture, having traveled, to meet the consequent engagements, more than twelve thousand miles.

Who that has listened, as we have had the privilege of recently doing, to the Honorable Edward Everett's classic analysis of the character of Washington, with its elegant arguments for national harmony, would imagine that more than sixty winters had passed over him, or ever forego the impression of his perfect oratory and pure patriotism?

Turning again to those whose age shrinks not from the complicated toils of authorship, we perceive a work from the pen of George Griffin, L. L. D., of New York, entitled "The Gospel its own Advocate." It was written after he had numbered more than threescore and ten, and shows the research of a mind

disciplined by the severe studies of jurisprudence, accustomed to weigh contending claims, to throw words into the crucible, and through all their fermentations watch for the witnessings of truth. It embodies the force of a clear intellect, and the conclusions of a long life. The learned author, now in his seventy-eighth year, still endued with vigor of mind and body, might in his hours of literary labor, have readily selected from the wide range of nature, or the familiar archives of history, a theme more accordant with the taste and spirit of the times, but religiously chose in this, as well as in a previous work, to devote the gathered lights of his experience to the defence and illustration of that gospel wherein is our hope.

The Memoir of the late Rev. Dr. William Croswell, of Boston, by the venerable Dr. Croswell, for more than forty years Rector of Trinity Church, in New Haven, Connecticut, is an octavo of more than five hundred pages, and undoubtedly the most affecting as well as judicious tribute that a man of genius and piety ever received from a father of almost fourscore. Girding himself to lay in the grave

the beloved one, who, according to the order of nature, should have closed his own dying eyes, instead of sinking under so great a sorrow, he rouses himself, and with the same zeal and patience with which in his hoary age he still ministers at the altar, constructs a monument which will endure when brass and marble perish.

An interesting catalogue might doubtless be constructed of authors, who after the period of seventy or even of eighty years, have continued to interest and instruct mankind. Dr. Johnson prepared his celebrated "Lives of the Poets," when more than threescore and ten; Hannah More wrote her work on "Prayer," at seventy-six; Richard Cumberland, his attractive auto-biography, at seventy-two, and his poem on "Retrospection," several years later. Dr. Blair, so celebrated for his Lectures on "Rhetoric and Belle Lettres," pursued his literary labors to a great age, and was engaged in preparing for the press, an additional volume of sermons, when Death took the pen from his hand, in his eighty-second winter.

At a still more advanced age, Walter Savage Landor, retains the force and elasticity which marked his youthful style, and has recently interested himself in editing a work, entitled "Letters of an American." At his pleasant house in Bath, England, healthful and happy, he delights by that peculiar wit, which in early days irradiated the pages of his "Imaginary Conversations," and gave him so high a rank among men of genius.

The compositions of Dr. Franklin, after he was eighty, some of which were dictated only a few days before his death, display much of that freshness and simplicity, which gave a charm to the productions of his earlier years.

The Rev. Sidney Smith, to the last, wielded a pen of power and versatility. "I do not consider my education by any means finished," said he at seventy-four. Ever was he learning something, not only in the intellectual field, but in those sciences that promote the comfort of domestic life, and in the healing art, that he might benefit his poor parishioners. When in his remote and ill-remunerated curacy of

Yorkshire, he managed to erect a dwelling, to construct a carriage that might bear him to his distant posts of labor, or accommodate his delicate wife, and also provide articles of furniture for the parsonage, combining convenience with some degree of grace, though the materials with which he could supply the workman, were but deal boards. To elevate the condition of the surrounding villagers, he devised gardens for them, dividing several acres of his glebe into small portions, and giving instruction at his intervals of leisure, in their right cultivation. A pleasant sight it was, those little expanses of rich vegetables, their crevices adorned with a vine, or flowering shrub, and the women and children cheerfully working there in early morning, ere they went forth to the labors of the day. There was not only added comfort for these families, but a pleasant emulation in their own hearts, to obtain the prize, he had kindly offered, for the best cultured, most productive domain.

The later years of his life were spent amid comparative wealth, and the clerical duties of

London, yet his benevolence and delight in social pleasures, did not yield to time.

“Should old age prove a state of suffering,” he says, “it is still one of superior wisdom. Then a man avoids the rash and foolish things to which he was tempted in youth, and which make life dangerous and painful.”

Those who have already attained that period, he thus advises :

“Be diligently occupied in the highest employments of which your nature is capable, that you may die with the consciousness of having done your best. Keep on; be energetic to the last. Take short views; hope for the best, and trust in God.”

A volume of poems, recently composed, during the short period of six months, by James Henry, M. D., and published in England, show that warmth of fancy and grace of versification may flourish amid the snows of fourscore.

We give a specimen of this octogenarian poetry, which like the other effusions in the book, is characterized by a spirit of gladness

and hope, proving that the heart has not grown either old or cold.

“Pleasant are the sun’s rays,
Hill and vale adorning ;
Pleasant are the small birds
Singing in the morning ;

Pleasant is the Spring’s breath,
Thro’ the thorn-hedge blowing ;
Pleasant is the primrose
In the garden growing ;

Pleasant is the kettle
O’er the bright fire singing ;
Pleasant are the joy-bells
In the steeple ringing ;

Pleasant is the wild bee’s
Right contented humming ;
Pleasant is the old friend’s
Long-expected coming.”

No author of modern times, has probably reached the date of Lewis Cornaro, the Venetian. His three treatises on health, and the means of its preservation, were written at the respective ages of eighty-one, eighty-five, and ninety-one. They are brief records of his own life and regimen, mingled with the reflec-

tions and precepts of a clear mind, and sound judgment. Their style is as perspicuous and sprightly, as that of a young man. They earnestly recommend the strict temperance and judicious exercise of both body and mind, by which he was enabled to restore the health which at forty seemed prostrated, but which for sixty years, with unimpaired intellectual power, it was his privilege to enjoy. At the age of more than one hundred years, while seated in his arm chair, and apparently without suffering, he ceased to breathe.

The author of the admirable "Essay on old age," remarks:

"The propensity to inaction which makes its insidious visit, at the commencement of the decline of life, is a weakness which by temperance, and determined resistance, may be vanquished and banished. Three observances are necessary:—strict temperance in diet, drink, and in emotions,—moderate exercise in the open air, and mental industry carried to a suitable extent, and bestowed on suitable subjects. Men of a high order of mental constitution, may thus render their decline capable of vigorous, and efficient action to a very advanced age, not unfrequently to their eightieth or even eighty-fifth year."

It might be pleasant to enlarge the list of

those, who to the extreme point of human life, have continued to enlighten others, by their intellectual efforts. But the present purpose is rather, by a desultory selection of examples, to prove that the mind may continue expanding, and refining to the utmost limit of mortal existence. The only reason to the contrary, is the disease or decay of those organs through which it receives and conveys impressions. By the foregoing instances, as well as others which might be adduced, it will appear that there is no necessary connection between this declension and their diligent use. Indeed, through the action of the brain, the nervous system may doubtless be so developed as to acquire even a more vigorous tone.

The fever of literary ambition, the rivalry of authorship, the morbid and insatiable thirst for popularity, are not numbered among the sanitary tendencies, or worthy ends of intellectual effort. Neither of the abuse of God's great gift of genius to the gratification of selfish and depraved tastes, have I wished to speak, but rather of its unison with the high-

est responsibilities, — of its open harmony with the perennial flow of the springs of life, — and of the long peace with which the Great Task-Master hath sometimes seen fit to crown it.

Friendship for the authors who have cheered or instructed us, is one of the peculiar pleasures of this present state of existence. We may have never seen their faces in the flesh, yet we have heard their voices. They may have died long before we were born. “But their speech hath gone forth to the end of the world.” We are their debtors for high and holy thoughts. Pearls have they gathered for us from the profoundest depths. Flowers that are ever fragrant, they strew around our solitary study. Their diadems sparkle through the darkness of midnight, as on our sleepless pillows we commune with them. Benefactors are they, to whom ingratitude is impossible, for their gifts have become a part of ourselves.

Literature, like those fields of benevolence in which all Christians can agree, offers a fair meeting-ground of compromise and of peace.

It has room enough and to spare. Its laborers may come and go, as brethren, and not impede each other. They may glean in safety, all day, like the true-hearted Moabitess, and "at night, beat out what they have gathered." Perchance, the world, like Naomi, may listen for their footsteps and bless them.

CHAPTER XII.

Aged Divines.

“Like living, breathing Bibles! Tables where
Both covenants at large engraven were ;
Gospel and Law, on heart had each its column,
Their head an index to the Sacred Volume,
Their very name a title-page :—and next,
Their life a Commentary on the text.”

REV. BENJAMIN WOODBRIDGE.*

It is an interesting study to trace the influence of the varied employments of man, upon his physical welfare. Some are manifestly hazardous, others destructive to life. They who “take the sword, are liable to perish by the sword.” They who “go down to the sea in ships,” prove by their brief average of years, at what risk they grapple with adverse ele-

* The first graduate of Harvard University.

ments. They who excite the earth to fruitfulness, not unfrequently find added vigor among the rewards of toil. Would it be irrational to infer that they who cultivate the fruits of immortality, might sometimes gather from their richness and fragrance, strength for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come?

Among the less exposed, and more sedentary professions, the employment of an instructor of youth, has been considered favorable to longevity. The cheering influence of companionship with the young, like an indwelling with fresh and beautiful thoughts, aids in preserving the youth of the mind; and if in the perpetual inculcation of good principles, and a right practice, there is a development of feeling, that makes even strangers dear, a solace for joys that are withheld, or have departed, it might be congenial also to physical as well as moral prosperity.

It would, therefore, not be surprising to find among those, who have chosen as their life's vocation, the highest interests of the soul, and

by voice or pen labored to promote them, many instances of healthful adjustment of structure to pursuit, and the prolonged use of those powers, which benevolence and piety called into action.

Looking back to the earlier periods of Christianity, we find the venerated Jerome, on the borders of ninety, and Epiphanius on the verge of a hundred. Bishop Burgess, in that remarkable work, entitled "The Last Enemy," so distinguished for learned research and profound piety, says, in adducing instances of long life:—

"St. Polycarp, seems to have been an exception to the common lot, and Simeon, the second Bishop of Jerusalem, reached one hundred and twenty years; both dying by martyrdom. Many of the saints and anchorites of the earlier ages, were famed for length of days. Paul, the Hermit, is said to have lived to be a hundred and thirteen: his follower, Antony, to a hundred and five; and John, the Silent, to a hundred and four. The cenobites of Mount Sinai, not unfrequently attained extreme age. In our own day, a Baptist minister, at one hundred and eight, has addressed a congregation from the pulpit."

Recently also, has been announced in England, the death of the Reverend G. Fletcher,

of the Wesleyan denomination, who continued active in duty to the same great age.

Bishop Leslie completed more than a century, and Bishop Barrington, in his ninety-third year, having read the usual Sunday course with his household, told them it "*was the last time,*" and ere the return of that hallowed day, yielded his breath so gently, that those who stood by his bedside, were unconscious of the moment of transition.

Thomas à Kempis, whose writings filled three folio volumes, and whose principal work, "The Imitation of Christ," was composed at the age of sixty, reached his ninety-second year, not only with unimpaired mental powers, but with the perfect use of eye-sight, unaided by spectacles.

At an equally advanced period, was Bishop Huet removed, and Bishop Wilson, whose "Sacra Privata," still breathes like living incense upon the altar of the pious heart. The venerated Bishop Lloyd, numbered ninety winters; and at the same age, Archbishop Harcourt, having attended divine service at York-

Minster, announced not again, beneath the arches of that noble cathedral, the "Lord is in His holy temple," being summoned ere the close of the week to a more glorious company, and a "house, eternal in the heavens."

John Wesley was enabled to persevere in his wonderful toils, till eighty-eight, having, before he reached his seventieth year, published more than thirty octavo volumes. On his seventy-second birthday he writes :

"I have been considering how it is, that I should feel just the same strength that I did, thirty years ago ; that my sight is even considerably better, and my nerves firmer than they were then ; that I have none of the infirmities of age, and have lost several that I had in my youth. The great cause is the good pleasure of God, who doeth whatever pleaseth Him. The chief means are, first, my constant rising at four, for the last fifty years ; second, my, generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthful exercises in the world ; and thirdly, my never traveling less, by sea and land, than four thousand miles a year."

Bishop Hurd, at a similar age with Wesley, closed a life of calm piety, by consigning himself, at the usual hour, to quiet sleep, from which he awoke no more on earth.

Theodore Beza, lived to be eighty-six, and Hoadley, eighty-five; Lardner was a year younger at his death, and John Newton, fourscore and two. Warburton closed his learned labors at eighty-one; and Lowth and Porteus and Simeon, completed their Christian example at seventy-seven; and Richard Baxter, at seventy-six, rose from the "Saint's Rest," which he so touchingly depicted, to that "Certainty of the World of Spirits," which he serenely anticipated. Archbishop Secker, at seventy-five, taught how saints can die; and William Jones, of Nayland, and Thomas Scott, the commentator, passed from faithful service to their great reward, at the age of seventy-four; and Bishop Andrews, the master of fifteen languages, who was appointed by James First, one of the principal translators of our present version of the Scriptures, continued until seventy-one, his untiring toils and devoted charities. Beveridge, beloved by all, ceased from his peaceful pilgrimage at seventy, and Philander Chase, for years the senior Bishop of the Episcopal church in these United States, closed

the earnest labors commenced in early youth, and the pioneer bravery of his unresting age, at seventy-seven.

At eighty-six, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, for more than threescore years, pastor of but one church in Northampton, Mass., was still a zealous and effective preacher; and the Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander, closed eighty years of Christian example, in the serene light of intellect and happiness. At seventeen he became a teacher in his native Virginia, at eighteen commenced preaching the Gospel, with singular fervor and fluency, and for the last forty years discharged the duties of a Professorship of eminence, in the theological Institution at Princeton, New Jersey. Old age was never adduced by him, as an excuse from any labor. "There are two errors," he said, "to which the aged are exposed. One is that of refusing to admit that they are old. The other, that of permitting themselves to become so prematurely."

Beautiful instances here and there occur, of divines, who have devoted all of life to one

post of duty, thus enjoying better opportunities to mature their plans of usefulness, and to see blessed fruits ripen in fields of their own planting.

Conspicuous among these, was the Rev. Dr. Routh, who sustained for sixty-four years, the presidency of Magdalen College, Oxford, and died within the last few months at the age of ninety-nine. This learned and venerable man, preserved good health, and habits of intellectual research, until the last. A bright link was he, between the present and the past, having in youth known those who had personally conversed with Ken, Bull, and Beveridge.

On the flourishing branch of the Church of England, established in America, he looked with a peculiarly affectionate interest, having more than seventy years before his death, used his influence in inducing our own Seabury to seek consecration from the Bishops of Scotland.

The extent and accuracy of his knowledge, and his suavity in imparting it, were proverbial. His judgment was so reliable, and his self-control so absolute, that men took counsel of him,

as of an oracle. Notwithstanding his extreme age, he was ever courteous to strangers, and accessible to the youngest person.

An interview with the President of Magdalen, was something to be remembered, even by men of letters and distinction. "That grave and solemn presence, that refined and somewhat austere politeness, the invariable pomp of full academic costume, the spare form, alive with intelligence, the inexhaustible library, the copiousness of quotation, and immense range of knowledge and memory, all recalled the majesty of the past." A monument of his reputation as a scholar and theologian, is the work entitled, "*Reliquiæ Sacra*," a new and revised edition, of which, he prepared, while approaching his hundredth year.

As a mark of the affectionate appreciation of the students under his charge, the following brief extract is subjoined from their last birth day tribute to this venerated guide and friend.

"In studious care a century well nigh past,
Three generations ROUTH'S fresh powers outlast;
A NESTOR'S SNOWS his reverend temples grace,

A NESTOR's vigor in his mind we trace.
 Judgment not yet on her tribunal sleeps ;
 Her faithful record cloudless Memory keeps ;
 Nor eye nor hand their ministry decline,
 The letter'd toils or service of the Nine.
 Yet through his heart the genial current flows,
 Yet in his breast the warmth of friendship glows :
 On rites of hospitality intent,
 Toward Christian courtesy his thoughts are bent ;
 While from his lips, which guile nor flattery know,
 "Prophetic strains" of "old experience" flow.

A blessing rest upon thy sacred head,
 Time-honor'd remnant of "the mighty dead,"
 Through whom Oxonia's sons exulting trace
 Their stainless lineage from a better race.
 Still may thy saintly course their beacon shine,
 Still round their heartstrings thy meek wisdom twine,
 Still be their loyal, loving homage thine ;
 And tardy may the heavenward summons come,
 Which calls thee from thy sojourn to thy home."

Bishop White, the beauty of whose silver locks, and saintly smile, still dwell in the memory of many, entered on his sacred duties, at the age of twenty-four, in the city of Philadelphia, and there continued as priest and prelate, for sixty-four years, until his death at eighty-eight. During two years spent in England, after the completion of his theological studies,

where he also received orders, he numbered among his privileges, to have seen and heard the voices of Bishop South, and Bishop Horne, Dr. Samuel Johnson, the giant of English literature, and the sweet poet, Oliver Goldsmith.

Amid the earliest troubles of our Revolution, he firmly espoused the cause of his country, was appointed chaplain to Congress, during the gloomy period of its flight to Yorktown, and continued after its return, to be elected annually to that office, until its permanent location at the present seat of government. The fourth year after his consecration as Bishop, Philadelphia sustained for several months, the ravages of pestilential yellow fever. Like the plague, it suddenly destroyed almost every victim whom it seized. The mortality was fearful. Those who had it in their power, took flight. Among them, was every minister of religion except himself. Removing his family into the country, he remained that he might lend the solaces of religion to all who suffered. Without regard to denomination, and in the poorest hovel he might be found, pointing to

the "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." Untouched by the Destroyer, while throngs around, and even the servants in his own house fell, he stood firm at his post, between the living and the dead, lifting the censer of prayer, until the "plague was staid."

Fearless in duty, and sincerely attached to the doctrines of his own church, he cherished no bigotry, or spirit of condemnation to those of differing opinions. In his meek soul, the prelacy wrought no pride. It made his humility and condescension more effective. Time, talents and fortune, he devoted conscientiously to the good of others. When on the verge of ninety, he was borne to his grave, the beautiful city of his birth mourned as for a father. Feelingly and forcibly was it said of him by one of another sect of Christians, that "he enjoyed a revenue above a monarch's command, his daily income was beyond all human computation, for whenever he went forth, age paid him the tribute of affectionate respect, and children rose up and called him blessed."

He was prized

As a pure diamond that an elder age
Bequeathed to this :—for souls that wrap themselves
In holy love, can never be alone,
Each waking generation clasps its arms
Fondly around them, and with plastic smile
Learns wisdom from their lips.

The Rev. William Jay, so widely known and highly prized for the fervor of his religious writings, was induced by circumstances to commence preaching, at the age of sixteen. In this exercise he was so eminently successful, and took such delight, that it was mingled with his course of study, and he had delivered more than a thousand sermons ere he had attained the age of twenty-one. Afterwards, he was settled as the pastor of Argyle Chapel, in Bath, where he continued for sixty-three years, until his death at eighty-four, encircled to the last moment, by the loving hearts of his people, and the reverence of mankind.

Many occasional services did he perform in London and its vicinity, and as his directness and pathos were powerful in moving to deeds of charity, he was frequently per-

suaded thus to advocate the different forms of benevolence that marked his times. Age did not impair either his freshness of memory, or his power in the pulpit. The Rev. Dr. Johns, of Baltimore, who during his travels abroad, listened to him in his own chapel, when in his eighty-fourth year, thus speaks :

“To the inquiries of American friends, as to whose preaching I liked best of all among those whom I heard while in England and Scotland, my answer has uniformly been, the old preacher at Bath, whom you all know as the author of the ‘Morning and Evening Exercises.’”

Amid the severity and variety of his labors, and the fame that attended them, the loveliness of his domestic and social character was conspicuous. His delight in rural scenery, and the simple pleasures of horticulture was great. When far advanced in years, he says in a letter to absent children :

“How many rose trees do you imagine I have in my garden? Five thousand four hundred and one. How fond I grow of flowers! A pious female said lately, while dying, I go to a land of *peace* and of *flowers*.”

So much did he desire to impart the pleasure he thus received, that it was his habit to give each of his servants, on Sunday, when going to church, a large handful of flowers, charging them on no account to bring them back, but distribute them to the poor people, who would value them more, as sent from his garden. Cheerfulness and gratitude to God, pervaded his daily course of duty, and beautifully has he thus expressed both:—

“The place of my residence, is of all others, that of my preference. My condition has been that happy medium of neither poverty nor riches. My friends have been many, and cordial, and steady. I have a better opinion of mankind, than when I began my public course. I cannot, therefore, ask, what is the cause that former days were better than these? Surely, goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.”

Twelve years before his death, the jubilee of his ministry at Bath, was celebrated with all the enthusiasm that an attached and liberal people could evince. Gifts of great value, and touching import were presented him, and clergymen of various denominations united in testifying respect for him, who had preached

the gospel in the love of it. Original hymns for the occasion were prepared by the poet Montgomery, from one of which we select the following stanzas.

“To God he gave his flower of youth,
To God, his manhood’s fruit he gave,
The herald of life-giving truth,
Dead souls from endless death to save.

Forsake him not in his old age,
But while his Master’s cross he bears,
Faith be his staff of pilgrimage,
A crown of glory his gray hairs.”

Seldom have I been more impressed by the happy temperament and almost youthful activity that may comport with threescore years and ten, than in the case of a minister of the Baptist denomination, met during my visit in Scotland, the Rev. William Innes of Edinburgh. He was in the habit of varying his more sedentary pursuits, by a summer excursion on foot, among the rude scenery and people of the Highlands. Having prepared himself to preach in their native tongue, he collected large audiences, who listened with riveted attention to

the truths of the gospel. This missionary service, which by most persons would have been deemed severe, was the only recreation in which he indulged during a whole year of steadfast, strenuous labor. He would return from it, with an elastic step, and a cheek and lip florid with health. Until between eighty and ninety, he was spared to guide a beloved flock by voice and example.

Rev. Rowland Hill, at an equally advanced age, was enabled to persevere in his work with, characteristic vivacity and eloquence. A pleasing description of some of his octogenarian labors, is given by the graphic pen of the Rev. Dr. Sprague of Albany. While on a visit to him, he mentions his spirited going forth one morning to fulfill an appointment at a church, fourteen miles distant from London, preaching at another on his homeward route at three in the afternoon, and again, with undiminished energy, a third service, after his return to the metropolis.

“I attended,” says the narrator, “this evening, worship, at Tottenham Court-Road Chapel, and found a thronged house,

and the preacher seemed just as vigorous and fresh as if his faculties had not been tasked at all during the day. He told me that upon an average, he preached about seven times a week, besides having much of his time taken up with public engagements, though he had then reached the age of eighty-three, and had been in the ministry sixty-four years. When I took my final leave of him, he said, 'Remember me kindly to any of my friends you may meet in America, and tell them that I have not quite done yet.'

I have never seen, on the whole, another man to whom Rev. Rowland Hill could be likened. The son of a baronet, there was nobility impressed upon his whole appearance, and bearing, and character; and yet no man labored more zealously than he for the improvement of the humblest classes. He had an exuberance of wit, and yet it was evident that he lived almost constantly amidst the realities of the future. He was gentle, and mild, and winning, and yet, when occasion required, would rebuke sinners, and come down upon the follies of the times, like a thunderbolt or an avalanche,"

Mingled with his originality and boldness, was a large benevolence, and tender pity for suffering. He erected Surry Chapel, and other places of worship at his own expense, tenements also for the indigent, and for the widow, and was a visitant of the lowliest shed, where poverty mourned, even to extreme old age.

The ecclesiastical history of our own country,

especially of New England, is rich in examples of consecration of the energies of a whole, long life, to a single church and people, thus giving broad scope for the blessed affections that spring from so hallowed an intercourse. Of these precious instances of pastoral constancy, the annals of Connecticut have their full share. In 1665, scarcely thirty years after its first colonists stirred the depths of its unbroken forest, with "their hymns of lofty cheer," we find the Rev. James Noyes, in his sea-girt home, at Stonington, guiding a single flock, for almost fifty-six years, till recalled by the Chief Shepherd, at fourscore.

The Rev. Samuel Andrew, was the pastor of Milford, from 1675, for a period of more than half a century. Besides his ministerial labors, he devoted much time and attention to Yale College, then in its infancy. Being a man of learning, he was an instructor of its senior class, after the death of the first President, before its permanent location in New Haven; and for nearly forty years continued an active member of its corporation.

In 1694, at Windsor, one of the earliest settled towns, on the banks of the beautiful Connecticut, the Rev. Timothy Edwards, assumed the pastoral duties, which for sixty-two years, he was enabled to discharge, with usefulness and happiness, to the age of ninety. Among his honors, should be recorded, that of training his illustrious son, the first President Edwards, one of the most devout men, and acute metaphysicians of his own, or any other times.

The first ecclesiastical Society in East Haven, had, from its birth, in 1708, for fifty years, enjoyed the fostering care of the Rev. Jacob Hemenway, whose cradle and grave were beneath the same fair shades; and after his death, that of the Rev. Nicholas Street, who on the day that completed the fifty-first anniversary of his acceptance of the sacred office, went peacefully to the Redeemer whom he loved. For more than a whole century did those two servants of God, watch over that one people.

The Rev. Anthony Stoddard, from 1704, completed a pastorate of fifty-eight years, in the romantic region of Woodbury.

A man he was of unresting activity, earnest and skillful in the wisdom of this life, as well as of that which is to come. His people sought counsel of him, as of an oracle. In many of their physical ailments, he was their healer; in their testamentary dispositions, their adviser, and clerk of probate; in cases of conflicting interest, their protector from the evils of litigation. Nor was this versatility, and extent of practical knowledge, so used as to impair the dignity of the pulpit, but perhaps, through an increase of personal sympathy, rendered it more efficacious.

The Rev. Moses Dickenson, who died at Newark, at the age of more than fourscore, had been sixty-four years in the active duties of the ministry. In his earlier prime, he officiated in New Jersey, but for more than half a century, was devoted to the affectionate people among whom he closed his eyes, and who paid him tribute in their simple monumental inscription, as a "man of good understanding, well-informed by study, cheerful in temper, and prudent in conduct."

The Rev. Solomon Williams, took charge of the church at Lebanon, somewhat more than half a century before our Revolution, having scarcely reached the age of twenty-one. Other professions might have allured him, for he was a distinguished scholar at Harvard University, where he graduated at eighteen; but the choice of his heart was theology. Fifty-four years, did he faithfully teach and serve that people. If there were differences to be composed among them, he was their peace-maker. Their passions were wont to yield to his mildness, and force of reasoning. Unassuming, yet fearless, his gravity was mingled with a serene cheerfulness, readily beaming out into pleasantry, and it was sententiously affirmed of him, by one qualified to judge, that he was through his whole clerical course, "so affable that all might approach him, yet so dignified that none could do so without respect."

The senior Governor Trumbull, a man of kindred excellence, and long one of the communicants in his church, characterizes him as "that eminently learned and pious divine." In

a letter to his distinguished son, the second Governor of that name, dated in the spring of 1776, he thus touchingly announces his decease :—

“ Alas! he is gone from us. To the last, he was calm, patient and resigned. Let us follow him as he followed our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. It will not be the fault of our dear departed Teacher, if we have not profited under his instructions. His friendship hath been one of the great comforts of my life.”

The same fair, rural township, where his ashes repose, was the birth-place of the Rev. Dr. John Smalley, for more than sixty years the beloved pastor at Berlin. For this long period he was exhibiting in that one spot, the beauty of Christian example, enforced by energy in the pulpit, knowledge of human nature, and soundness of judgment, in the daily intercourse of life. At the age of eighty-six, Death unbraced his armor, and taught him the triumph-song,—“ thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Trumbull, was ordained at North Haven, in 1760, and contin-

ued to discharge pastoral duty, with great fidelity, among the same people, for sixty years; attaining himself, the age of fourscore and four. To his ministerial toils, he added those of authorship, bequeathing to posterity, the "History of Connecticut," in two volumes octavo; a "History of the United States," not entirely finished, with other works on theological subjects. The patient research in accumulating facts and statistics, and the persevering labor, requisite to the accurate historian, and which no other writer can fully comprehend, he possessed in full measure. Venerated by all his cotemporaries, his pen and life wrought out the same memorial of intellectual eminence and saintly piety.

The Rev. Dr. Andrew Lee, from 1768, officiated as the pastor of Hanover, sixty-two years, unaided and alone, and sixty-four, with the occasional assistance of a colleague. Gravity, and "sound speech, that needeth not to be ashamed," were among the elements of his character. So were, also, contentment with his lot, and its duties, and an aversion to

change, from principle. To a young minister, who consulted him on the subject of taking a new parish, saying that it would "help his stock of sermons," he replied.

"Will it help your *stock of grace*, brother? Or would it help to build up the churches, if all their pastors turned itinerants, to save themselves the trouble of study?"

In his eighty-eighth year, he gave his last blessing to the rural scenes of his love and toil, and entered into the "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

And now, suffer me to pause by an unassuming, sacred edifice, overshadowed by towering ledges of gray rock, at whose base glide the bright waters of the Yantic. From that pulpit, while one hundred and seventeen years, notched their seasons upon those cliffs, and generation after generation yielded to the sickle of time, the voice of but *two* spiritual guides were heard, teaching the way of salvation. Of one, the fathers have told me—the other, shed the baptismal water on my infancy, and drew my youthful feet within the fold of Christ.

Dr. Benjamin Lord, born in 1693, took charge of the church at Norwich, in 1717, continuing there for sixty-seven years, until his death in his ninety-second year. Though he attained such longevity, his constitution was not vigorous, and the measure of health that he enjoyed, especially in early life, seemed the result of care, rather than of native strength. Still this prudence never withheld him from any duty of his sacred profession, for self was forgotten, when his Master called. Like an affectionate father with his children, he dwelt among his people. "In their hearts I have lived," said he, "and they in mine."

At the age of seventy-four, he preached his half-century sermon, apparently possessed of more physical endurance than in his prime, and also, a sixty-fourth anniversary sermon, when in his eighty-ninth year. Emphatically might it have been said of him, "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

Dimness, in the later years of his ministry, gathered over his sight. Yet still he sat in the accustomed chair in his study, and wrote his

discourses, partially by the sense of feeling, guiding, as well as he was able, the course of his lines upon the paper, with the fingers of his left hand. Then a gentle grand-daughter, who greatly loved him, would read slowly to him, with her sweet clear voice, what he had composed, until it was so impressed upon his memory, that he could deliver it with his wonted fluency. Fitting scene for a painter, that man, so meekly beautiful, his hoary head slightly declined, listening to his own sacred themes, from the filial lips of the fair-haired maiden. Indeed, his flock, who were pleased with whatever their old Shepherd did, said his sermons were even better than before he became blind, for the great labor of transcribing, gave force of condensation, and his natural fullness of thought and language, sometimes approached redundancy. Though of a gentle spirit, he was occasionally earnest and authoritative in demanding obedience to the requisitions of the Gospel.

Difference of religious opinion, in those days, as well as in our own, sometimes interrupted

Christian intercourse. A degree of estrangement, had been thus permitted to exist, between him and the minister of an adjacent township. But the hallowed influence of age, and the approach to a clime of perfect harmony, melted the shades of doctrine, and the ice of prejudice. He could not bear that any cloud should obscure the sunlight of charity, and remembering this one instance of an alienated friend, determined himself to make advances for reconciliation. An interview was requested, and when the saintly old man, saw the younger one approaching, he rose to meet him, and taking both his hands, said with a tenderness that melted those present to tears, "Brother underneath thee be the Everlasting Arms. May we dwell together where love is eternal."

With what affectionate reverence did the people watch their blessed minister, as when past the age of ninety, having for almost seventy years, spread before them the riches of the Gospel, and besought them to be reconciled to God, he was led in his feebleness, Sunday after Sunday, to ascend the pulpit stairs,

and pronounce the benediction. When he sometimes said, with trembling tones, and the smile as of an angel, "I am now ready to be offered up: the time of my departure is at hand," though every soul among them, might have responded, "Thou hast fought the good fight, thou hast kept the faith," or listened for a voice from above, "Henceforth, there is laid up for thee a crown of righteousness," yet in the depth of their love, they were ready rather to weep.

"Like flock bereft of shepherd, when snows shut out the day."

By his side, attentive to every movement, anxious to relieve him from every care, stood his young colleague, the Rev. Joseph Strong. Gray-headed men, who remembered his ordination, have described it as a scene, strikingly impressive. The concourse was large and attentive, the music devout and elevating. The candidate about to receive the sacred vows, was surrounded by many elders in the ministry. The preacher selected for the occasion, was his own brother, Rev. Dr. Nathan Strong, for

more than forty years, pastor of the First Congregational church in Hartford, and one of the most distinguished and eloquent men of his times. His text was from the sublime prophet. "How beautiful upon the mountains, are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." The rich and tender tones of his voice trembled with feeling, as at the close he said:

"My dear brother, now may I address you by that endearing epithet, in all senses. We received our being, under God, from the same parents, were educated by the same nurturing kindness, have professed obedience to the same glorious Master, and this day introduces you as a fellow-laborer in his vineyard. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me, my brother; and never was my joy greater in beholding thee, than on this day's solemnities. Long may thy feet be beautiful on these mountains of Zion."

Still deeper was the emotion, when the father of these two ministers, himself long the esteemed pastor of a neighboring township, came forward, and solemnly charged this his young son, to be faithful to the high trust committed to him, in the presence of men, and of angels.

Pointing to his predecessor in that pulpit, bending under the weight of years, yet from whose dim eye beamed a light that earth might not darken, he adjured him to "serve with that beloved and venerated man, as a son with the father, as Timothy with Paul, the aged."

A model of reverent and filial regard was the whole intercourse of this youthful colleague with the aged Shepherd, until he exchanged his pastoral staff, for a "seat at the Redeemer's footstool." The Rev. Dr. Strong of Norwich, was a man of great benevolence, and eminently successful in preserving the unanimity and respect of his people. I hear now, in memory's echo, the inflections of his voice, in his wonderfully solemn, concise prayer, or when he comforted the mourners. I imagine that I still see him, as he passed in the streets; his tall form, his stately movement, the faultless neatness of his costume. The rudest boy hushed himself, and grew demure, as he approached. At school visitations, he entered as a superior being. We, children, strove to be perfect at our recitations, and maintained the most unexceptionable

demeanor in his presence. A word from him, was a thing to be boasted of, and always worth treasuring. The high respect, paid in those days to the teachers of religion, was his without a drawback ; so gentlemanly was he at all times, so perfect in social intercourse, and in all life's beautiful duties. Never for the sake of popularity, did he lay aside the dignity appertaining to an ambassador of God. All his influence was consecrated on that altar where his heart was laid in youth. It was sacred to the good order, the improvement, the private and public virtue of the community among whom his lot was cast. Thus he continued, a benefactor to all around, until in the fifty-seventh year of his ministry, and the eighty-second of his life, the voice of grieving affection said, "the memory of the just is blessed."

His fourscore years

Sate lightly on him, for his heart was glad,
Even to its latest pulse, with that blest love,
Home-nurtured and reciprocal, which girds
And garners up, in sorrow and in joy.

The Rev. John Tyler, was the first regularly

settled clergyman of the Episcopal church, in Chelsea, the southern section of my native city. He had been educated in Congregationalism, the prevalent denomination of the State, but embracing the doctrines of the Church of England, crossed the ocean in 1768, to receive ordination, and the following year returned, and entered on the duties of the priesthood. During the war of the Revolution, when the mind of the whole country was so embittered against the Mother Land, that even her Liturgy did not escape odium, his church was closed for a period of three years; but a band of faithful worshippers gathered in his own house, where divine service was performed every Sunday, without molestation. So conciliatory was his manner, and so consistent his piety, that when the passions of men ran highest, he was respected as a true servant of the Prince of Peace. Conscientious and unshrinking in duty, he still bore upon his life and his brow, the motto, "giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed."

The establishment of a new sect, in the im-

mediate vicinity of others, long accustomed to priority and power, requires both discretion and tolerance. These virtues seem to have been here, in mutual exercise, from the beginning. Invitations to Episcopalians to hold their festivals in the more spacious Congregational meeting-house, were repeatedly given, and cordially accepted. At length an instance of reciprocity occurred, worthy of remembrance. In the year 1794, a sweeping conflagration destroyed the place of worship of the Congregationalists, and the parish of Christ Church, in sympathy, voted to accommodate their bereaved neighbors in their own edifice, the pastor of each denomination officiating alternately, one half of every Sunday. This arrangement of Christian hospitality and courtesy, subsisted for several months in perfect harmony, and was acknowledged by a public expression of gratitude, inserted in the records of both societies.

Good Mr. Tyler, in the benevolence of his nature, aimed to relieve bodily as well as spiritual ills, and became so skillful in ex-

extracting the spirit of health from the plants of his garden, and roots of the forest, as often to become the healer of the suffering poor.

In his own family he cultivated the perception and power of melody. Chanted hymns in sweet accordance hallowed their morning and evening devotions. Music, nursing holy thought, dwelt among them as a bird of heaven.

One who observed the sweet countenances, and amiable deportment of his children, inquired if he pursued any peculiar mode of education, to produce so happy a result. He replied :

“If anything disturbs their temper, I say to them *sing* ; and if I hear them speaking against any person, I call them to sing to me, and so they seem to have sung away all clouds of discord, and every disposition to scandal.”

He was possessed of persuasive eloquence, as a preacher, and a voice singularly sweet in its modulations. With meekness he bowed himself down to the griefs of others, while his devotion uplifted and upheld them. It was in his silver, plaintive tones, that I first heard the burial service of the Church of

England. We stood by the open grave of a school-mate, suddenly smitten in her young bloom. Having neither of us brother or sister, we had striven to make up that deficiency to each other, till a great love had sprung up between us. As they laid her fair head beneath the broken summer turf, and uprooted grass-flowers, that tuneful voice turned the grief and the silence, into such melodies as angels use. Through a flood of childhood's tears, I said to my mother, "Let that same be read over me, when I am dead."

Afterwards, some of our young band, accounted it a privilege, to be permitted to take a winter walk of four miles, (two going, and two returning,) to hear that godly man conduct the solemn festivities of Christmas. The last time I heard his voice of sweetness, was with the emotion which has never yet been translated into words: when the bride, about to leave father and mother, stands by his side, who is to be henceforth "her more than brother, and her next to God." When he imposed that hal-

lowed vow, which Death alone can sever, he was weak and tremulous with age.

On his monument, amid the beautiful combination of rocks, woods and waters, where so long his favored lot was cast, may be read the following inscription :

“ Here lie interred, the earthly remains of the Rev. John Tyler, for fifty-four years Rector of Christ’s Church in this city. Having faithfully fulfilled his ministry, he was ready to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. His soul took its flight, Jan 20th, 1823, when he had reached the eighty-first year of his age.”

Among other clergymen of the Episcopal Church, who have consecrated longevity, and faithful labor, to the benefit of one people, but of whose distinctive lineaments of character I am not in possession, were the Rev. John Beach, who continued at Newtown, from his ordination in 1723, for half a century; the Rev. Dr. Bela Hubbard, at New Haven, from 1764, for forty-eight years; and the venerable Dr. Mansfield, from 1746, at Derby, for the unusually long period of seventy-four years, himself reaching on life’s dial-plate, the patriarchal point of almost a century.

Give praise to God, from whom proceeds
Each gift and purpose high,
Strength to the pastor wise and pure,
Strength to the aged to endure,
Strength to the saint to die.

The Rev. John Noyes, accepted the charge of the Congregational church, at Norfield, or Weston, as it is now called, in 1786, at the age of twenty-four. Emphatically his work was his delight, and it was said of him that "his smile was without a cloud, like the angel standing in the sun." The love of his people, as well as of an extensive circle of friends, followed him through life, and a part of his eulogy in death, was, that "he had no enemy." Having commenced to preach before his ordination, he had been more than sixty years engaged in the ministry, and died at the age of eighty-four. He gave a halfcentennial sermon, and prepared one for his sixtieth anniversary. But between his laying down of the pen, and his entrance into the pulpit, Death came, and the valedictory was read by other lips. In it he mentions, that though ill-health, occasioned by over-exertion,

had compelled him to an interval from stated pastoral duty, he had "never since his ordination, changed his residence." His example was in accordance with the opinion that "a long-continued ministry, under the same pastor, better promotes the stability of the churches, the soundness of faith, and the healthful growth of piety, than one that is subject to frequent and fitful changes."

The Rev. Levi Nelson, ordained at Lisbon, at the age also of twenty-four, proved a most faithful, and acceptable laborer in the vineyard of his Lord. Truly he was a man of a sincere and upright spirit. In the half century sermon, delivered to his one only flock, he mentions having given them from the pulpit, nearly five thousand sermons, and that but one of the communicants who welcomed him at his arrival, was then in the land of the living. Feelingly and reverently he alludes to the aged portion of the congregation, who attended so punctually his Sabbath services, "not despising his youth."

“Most of them seemed to possess a deep tone of piety. To this day, I love to think of their saintly appearance in the House of God, of the seats they occupied, and their significant expression of approbation of the word of truth.”

Rev. Dr. Nathan Perkins, became the minister at West Hartford, in 1772, at the age of twenty-three. He was a graduate of Princeton College, and studied his profession, under the venerable Dr. Lord, of Norwich. The people had been divided before his entrance among them, and it is no slight proof of the discretion of so young a man, that following as he did, twenty candidates, each of whom had some partial adherent, he should concentrate and eventually render permanent, the affections of the whole people. More than sixty-five years did he serve them, never having been settled elsewhere, though he declined other alluring calls. They appreciated his superior talents, his ready zeal for their good, his deep, unaffected piety. His influence over them, deepened as it was by time, became unbounded, for his contemplative, well balanced mind, being capable of ruling itself, had the inherent

power of ruling others. Mild in his temperament, and friendly to life's innocent enjoyments, those who had been favored with intimate intercourse, said they had never seen him moved to anger.

Whenever, and wherever his people desired to hear the truths of the gospel, he was ready to address them, either in church or in school-house. Cherishing the love of literature, and learning, for which he was early distinguished, he delighted in the instruction of youth, and aided many in their preparatory classical training, as well as in theological studies.

His manners were admirably adapted to win and maintain reverence both of young and old. He possessed a high-toned self-respect, a sensitiveness to clerical propriety in the smallest things, yet softened by Christian urbanity, and graced by the politeness of a gentleman of the old school. One who had known him from boyhood says :

“The impression stamped deep upon my soul, from the entire being, spirit, and conduct of that man, is reverence for the Christian ministry, and unbounded honor for the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

He was a clear writer, and a pleasant persuasive speaker: in his distinct, deliberate utterance, every word was audible, and every thought had its full force. He preached a fiftieth and sixtieth anniversary sermon, and in reviewing the national changes which he had witnessed, remarks:—

“I have lived to see great revolutions in the world, in our own country, in commerce, and in mediums of trade. I have seen the evils of war,—my native Land bleeding at every pore, and the prospect darker than midnight gloom. I have seen the mighty conflict that achieved our independence. I have seen the time of framing a national constitution of government, when all wise men, and able statesmen trembled.”

The compensation of his services, was small, one hundred pounds annually; but being in possession of a considerable patrimonial fortune, he was enabled to indulge the promptings of benevolence. These were a part of his nature.

“I am determined,” said he, “that though I may die a poor man, I will die a generous one.”

His practice was uniform with this resolu-

tion. In contrasting the blessedness of giving, with that of receiving, he remarked :

“I have always wondered, why Avarice, proceeding on its own plan of accumulating to itself the greatest quantity of good, never adopted benevolence as the basis of its action.”

He occupied but one abode, a parsonage which he himself purchased, large, plain, commodious, peacefully overshadowed by trees, and not inconsistent with simple elegance. Thither, in his prime of manhood, he led a gentle bride of seventeen, the daughter of a neighboring clergyman. A proficient was she in that household science which ensures comfort and commands respect, and also, in the higher lore of living, earnest piety. There, while sixty-three years drew over them, they exhibited in beautiful fidelity, all the conjugal and paternal virtues.

There it was once my privilege to see them. Eighty-six years had he numbered, yet his stately form yielded not to time, and the silver hair receding from his broad crown, floated lightly and gracefully down the temples toward the

shoulders. I was charmed with his affability and dignity, and his saintly words of the life to come. She too, the sharer and heightener of all his joys was still of a comely aspect, cheerful, and full of Christian courtesy. Scarcely ever in her long life had she been so ill, as to commit to other hands, the domestic policy that she understood and loved. But at last, sickness came. Pulmonary consumption, with its fiery shaft, and suffocating pang, smote her. Many months she endured that wasting agony, until the "bones that were not seen, stood out."

Full of tender sympathy, yet as one amazed, the aged servant of God regarded her, who had so long been the light of his home, and heart. Like the Apostle Elliot, it seemed not to have occurred to him, that the fresher spirit, the younger yoke-fellow, should be first summoned. But he took his stand beside her, to strengthen her while she suffered the will of God. By her bed, he studied and wrote his sermons, and when she saw his noble brow radiant with holy thought, she uplifted her faith

and followed him. He spoke blessed things to her of the Redeemer of Man, patient unto death, till she forgot her pain. Night and day he girded himself afresh from the armory of heaven, that he might uphold her, who battled more and more feebly with the Destroyer. Into the valley of the shadow of death, as far as mortal foot might go, he followed her.

When all was over, he repined not. His mourning was subdued, like the servant who reveres his Lord's will. But the charm of earth was broken.

“To the afflicted, she was always sympathizing,” said the bereaved husband, “to benefactors, thankful, to those in want, beneficent, studying the peace, harmony, and good of all under my pastoral care; she lived beloved, and died lamented, in the full hope of a blessed immortality.”

When the falling leaf was taking its first autumnal tint, she departed. Every day afterward, however deluged the earth might be with rain, or drifted with snow, that aged man went to spend a little time at her grave. Every day, except that which God had set apart for his own worship; then he felt that his duties as an

ambassador of heaven, were higher than his private griefs. Four months passed, and soon after the dawning of the New Year, as he was on his way to the sanctuary, a messenger invisible to mortal eye, met him, and said, "Come up higher." Ere the next Sabbath, he was laid by her side.

Manifestly was his prayer answered that he might not outlive his usefulness. Till his eighty-ninth year he was fit for faithful service. Only five days did the failing flesh hold the spirit from its home. During that period he spoke not. Paralysis of the throat, was his form of dismissal. But with the eye, and the smile of one ready for a glorious existence, he held communion with those around, and recompensed the daughter, who leaving her own family, came and took care of him with the tenderest love. Perchance, in that pause of silence, the waiting soul, disengaging itself from the love of earth, was better fitted to join the great song of the redeemed.

The Rev. Dr. Calvin Chapin, was ordained at Rocky Hill, in 1794, where he continued

fifty-seven years, until his death, which took place within a few months of his eighty-eighth birth-day. His naturally strong constitution had derived additional vigor from an agricultural training, the first twenty years of his life having been spent on the paternal farm. The same habits of zealous industry transferred to scholastic study, caused him to excel in that department. His attainments were afterwards deepened and matured by passing two years as the instructor of a school in Hartford, and nearly three as a tutor in Yale College. He had great fondness for the employment of imparting knowledge,—and always referred with pleasure to the period of time, thus devoted.

He pursued theological studies with the Rev. Dr. Perkins of West Hartford, and entered on ministerial duty, with a deep sense of responsibility to his Divine Master.

“I am not aware, said he,—that in preparing a sermon, I ever inquired what would please or displease the people. What is immutable truth? What do sinners need? What do christians need? What is the preaching which Christ directs and will bless? Such has been my rule. Preaching should be earnest talk.”

In corporate bodies, in the formation of religious societies, in the promotion of philanthropy, his efforts were conspicuous, and his decisions respected. This prominence, and the appreciation that attended it, caused frequent applications to change his place. Some of these were attractive, with regard to perquisite, and personal ambition. Among them, was the offer of the presidency of two colleges. But the principle of pastoral constancy was strong within him. He agreed in opinion with his venerable friend, the Rev. Dr. Marsh of Wethersfield, who continued faithful to the verge of fourscore, at one post of duty,—that “he should as soon think of leaving his wife, as his people.”

He was a man of intense, and versatile industry. Though a thorough scholar, and delighting in books, he knew how to use his hands to good purpose. He had constructiveness in the management of tools, and kept some thirty acres of land in profitable culture. He was skilful in the production of fine fruits; and twigs grafted by himself, were favorite gifts to

friends. Now, as large, thrifty trees, they keep in memory, by their annual harvest, him, who was still more earnest to set in the mental soil, the plants of righteousness.

He had the power of turning from one employment to another, without rupturing trains of thought. Order, economy, and the unities of time and place, seemed inherent habitudes of his mind. A full flow of spirits pervaded his whole course of action. Yet, he was inured to physical suffering, notwithstanding his vigor of frame. Acute rheumatism was one of his maladies; fever and ague, taken during a missionary tour at the west, taught him its fearful alternations; and asthma, his foe from childhood, so annoyed him, that sometimes in the night he left his chamber, and mounting his horse, rode for miles, to parry the sense of suffocation. At others, he would spend whole nights in his study, by reading and writing, overruling the consciousness of pain, and striving to turn his broken rest to advantage. He was one of the few who required slight refreshment from sleep, seldom more than six hours out of twenty-four;

and never lying down to rest in the day. He was not inclined to allude to his ailments, but what he could not conquer, endured with resolution, and singular cheerfulness.

“Tell about low spirits?—he would say—For shame!—I prosecute my work, without regarding any of these things.”

My own impression of him, from a single unceremonious interview, was that of a man, who mingled with whatever he did, the strength of a happy heart, and who influenced others, not only by innate power and piety, but by the simple truthfulness of his words, and the genial spirit of his manners.

His domestic virtues, and enjoyments were delightful. A daughter of the younger President Edwards, whom he won in the bloom of seventeen, for more than half a century was his chief earthly joy. Four years before his own departure, and when he was himself nearly eighty-four, she was called to eternal rest.

“She made my home, said he, the pleasantest spot on earth. Now she is gone,—my worldly loss is perfect.”

Yet still with cheerfulness, and those habits of industry that sought the good for this life and the next, of all around, he lightened his lot of loneliness. He counted it a high privilege that he was enabled to be profitably occupied, until life's close. Though relieved from the weight of pulpit cares, he attended as usual, divine service, the Sunday preceding his death, employed himself industriously till the close of the week, and after a slight indisposition, seated in his chair,—passed without a sigh to that heavenly world, which his satisfied spirit, so calmly contemplated.

Sweetly has he given his suffrage of old age, that period often so unwisely dreaded, and unjustly delineated.

“Having retired from every official demand abroad, without the shadow of embarrassment at home, and consequently finding myself perfectly at leisure, I yet seem never to have been in my life so busy. My often expressed opinion is, that notwithstanding the decays that unperceived by myself, I know age must be steadily producing, I never enjoyed existence better. In my chamber, I dwell, as in a paradise. Here too, I am certain, the Infinite Mind is always accessible.”

But the patriarch among the pastors of his

native State, was the Rev. Dr. Samuel Nott of Franklin. That pleasant agricultural township, formerly an appendage of Norwich, and called its West Farms, had become disturbed in the exercise of its religious polity. Two ministers had been dismissed, and numerous candidates presented themselves in the pulpit, without securing unanimity of choice. At length, in 1782, a young man of a serious and pleasing aspect, stood there, by request, addressing them from the inspired passage, "I ask therefore, with what intent, ye sent for me." Verily, a good intent. And a good result. Seventy years of faithful service,—until those bright locks should be white as the almond-tree.

He adds another to the many instances, where a delicate constitution and feeble health in youth, are by prudence and the divine blessing, led to increased strength, and decided longevity. Probably such rewards are more likely to ensue, than where native vigor depends arrogantly upon itself. During the first years of his ministry, he found it expedient to confine himself to a diet of milk, yet withdrew

from no ministerial effort, parochial visit, or duty to his household. In his half century sermon he mentions, that he had been withheld by indisposition, from the public services of the sanctuary, but six sabbaths, for that whole period. He speaks of six hundred and ten graves, over whose tenants he had performed the funeral obsequies, in six of which, slumbered his own children.

I remember, in early days to have seen him more than once, in the pulpit of my own minister. He was tall, and of a grave aspect, and his words were searching and solemn. In my simplicity I likened him to an ancient prophet; me thought to the one who cried, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths,—where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls."

With his clerical toil, he mingled occasional participation in the cares of instruction, preparing a number of young men for college, and superintending the studies of others who were to enter the ministry. Feeling deeply the value of education, as those are prone to do, who

defray its expenses by their own exertions, he had given pecuniary aid in such measure as he was able, to between two and three hundred who were striving to earn its benefits. These charities, with the thorough nurture of his own children, and the materials of comfort for his family, required amid restricted means, the most judicious use both of time and money.

Self-denial was a part of his religion. In this respect, he both taught and exemplified that the "disciple need not be above his Lord." Doubtless this virtue has something to do with growth in grace, as well as with consistency in a spiritual guide ; allowing no room for competition in show or extravagance, for indolence or luxurious indulgence that war against the soul. "By economy, industry, and the divine blessing, says this primitive pastor, I have never even nominally been expensive to my people, beyond the original contract. My salary is \$333 ; about \$230 by individuals, and twelve loads of wood annually, were kindly added. I have seen the time, when as far as compensation was con-

cerned, I might have changed my situation advantageously. Yet though it has been so common, especially of late years, for ministers and people, either from necessity, or a restless disposition to part, I have nevertheless, thought it my duty to abide at the post where I was first stationed."

The simple, but rare morality of avoiding debt, and the higher philosophy that "made his wish with his estate comply," were features in his christian example, worthy of imitation and praise. In consistence with these principles, and illustrating all the virtues of a cheerful, deep-rooted, and self-sustaining piety, life drew on, amid the harmony, and love of his flock, until he had passed several months beyond his ninety-eighth birth-day. From the grave, we seem to listen to that venerated voice, repeating its time-honored counsels.

"Dear friends, you have each of you, your day, your sphere of usefulness. You can live but once. Let the world be the better for you, while you do live."

Still continuing to search in the annals of Connecticut, for those divines, who have con-

nected faithful service with longevity, we find the names of Rev. Dr. Joseph Bellamy of Bethlehem; Rev. Dr. Joseph Whitney of Brooklyn; Rev. Noadiah Russell of Middletown; Rev. Ammi R. Robbins of Norfolk; Rev. Daniel Dow of Thompson; Rev. Thomas Canfield of Roxbury; Rev. Peter Starr of Warren; as having labored for fifty years, or more, without change, at a single post of duty. The tomb-stone of the Rev. Frederick W. Hotchkiss, of Saybrook, records that his death took place at fourscore, after having been pastor of one church for sixty years.

Yet not alone, to olden times, or the memory of departed worthies, do we turn for such honored testimonies. They are found among living witnesses. The Rev. Dr. Joab Brace, has recently delivered an interesting discourse at Newington, recapitulating his labors, and the mutations of fifty years; in the course of a few months, the Rev. Dr. Abel McEwen of New London, and the Rev. Dr. Noah Porter of Farmington, complete their bi-centennial pastorate; and numerous instances might be cited

where for thirty and forty years, the shepherd has guided in green pastures, and beside still waters, the same trusting flock.

A complete catalogue has not been attempted. The space at my command would not admit of it. In pursuing the interesting research how far the duties of a spiritual teacher were favorable to longevity, the theory involuntarily presented itself, that continuance in one sphere of action, or the habitudes that are involved in that continuance, may possess a conservative influence. In the narrow circle which has been contemplated, evidence seems to have been adduced, that this "patience of hope" has been often rewarded by prolonged capacities for the "labor of love." It might appear that avoiding to untwine and break the tendrils of holy affection, had given vitality to the vine, and sparing to pour the "oil of the sanctuary" from vessel to vessel, aided the frail lamp longer to burn.

I am not aware that my native State transcends others in the number of these beautiful instances of God's goodness, and man's con-

stancy. I have selected it, because the materials were more readily available.

It is pleasant now to gather from different localities, and a broader field, a few examples of clerical usefulness, freshly surviving amid the winter of age. The Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Nott, the brother of our Nestor of Connecticut pastors, sustains without declension, at the age of eighty-five, the onerous office of President of Union College, Schenectady. For the long period of fifty-two years, he has skillfully and successfully conducted the interests of that important Institution, having had under his charge nearly five thousand students. He possesses much knowledge of human nature, and that unbounded forbearance and hope for the errors of youth, that are often among the powerful elements of its reinstatement, and elevation. He is an eloquent speaker, and still occasionally officiates in the pulpit. A new edition of his "Counsels to Young Men," has recently been issued from the press, enriched by additions from his pen; a valued contribution to octogenarian literature.

One of our periodicals records the interesting circumstance, that a pulpit in Salem, Mass., was lately occupied on the Sabbath, by two aged brothers, the Rev. Brown Emerson, its own minister, in his seventy-eighth year,—and the Rev. Reuben Emerson of South Reading, in his eighty-fourth, both of whom have been in the exercise of pastoral duty for more than half a century. On this occasion, the usual services were combined with the administration of the sacrament, and the admission to that ordinance of a number of new communicants. The entire exercises were conducted by these venerable men, with a remarkable degree of physical vigor and mental fervor. The youngest having some slight indisposition, it was observed that the older brother, was assiduous to relieve him, and to assume wherever it was possible the heavier portion of the toils of the day.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Brownell, senior Bishop of the United States, has presided nearly forty years over the Episcopate of Connecticut, and now approaches the boundary of fourscore:

He has long been a resident of Hartford, and though in feeble health, mingles as far as possible, in the sacred duties of his station. The tones of his tremulous voice are still a melody to those who revere and love him.

His principal published writings are a large "Family Commentary on the Prayer Book;" and the "Religion of the Heart and Life," a work in five volumes, presenting the condensed opinion of many distinguished divines, on the highest interests of the soul. In his Introduction he remarks,

"Man has affections to be matured and improved as well as an intellect to be enlightened. It is not enough therefore, that his mind embrace sound doctrinal views of christianity, his heart must be affected by these doctrines, and renewed by their influence, and the effects of this renovation must be made manifest in a pure, and holy life.

His wise and conciliatory counsels have remarkably resulted in the harmony of his Diocese. In his address, at the recent Convention, after speaking of the infirmities of age, and meekly reviewing his long spiritual administration, he says :

“I am not conscious in all that period, of having cherished unkind feelings to any clergyman in my diocese, or of having uttered unkind language to any one. Neither am I conscious that any one has by thought or word manifested unkindness towards me. This is a source of unmingled satisfaction,—and if the present should be our last meeting, I feel that we shall part in peace and mutual charity.”

A blessed suffrage. Long may the beauty of his venerable presence, and serene example remain among us.

The Rev. Lincoln Ripley,—a resident of Maine, though in his ninety-fifth year, enjoys comfortable health, and is not unfitted for the duties of his sacred office. A brother of his, retained his ministerial charge in Massachusetts for more than half a century, until his death at the age of ninety. This whole family present a distinguished instance of longevity. It originally comprised nineteen,—eight sons, and eleven daughters, all of them children of one pious, pains-taking mother. Of this large circle, ten surpassed the limits allotted to the life of man; five lived beyond eighty, and three beyond ninety years. Of the last named trio, one of the sisters is mentioned in the suc-

ceeding chapter of this work, as illustrating the happy usefulness that may comport with great age: and three of the brothers, selected the pastoral office in youth, and faithfully consecrated to its duties, their heritage of days.

The Rev. Dr. T. M. Cooley, of Granville, Mass., is a native of that romantic and almost Alpine region, where as a servant of God, he has labored for more than sixty years. Still he is enabled to minister to an affectionate people, with the glowing warmth of a pious heart at the age of fourscore and four. His first sermon after receiving license to preach, was delivered in that place of his birth, where he was persuaded to take spiritual charge of a congregation, comprising father and mother, grand-parents and many gray-haired people; though he accounted himself with humility, as "but a babe in Christ." Very happy has been that long connection. Its Jubilee was observed about eleven years since, and its festive ceremonies and addresses are preserved in the form of an interesting little book. The pastor in his

recapitulatory discourse, speaks of his interest in the supervision of schools, and his labors as a practical teacher, adding—

“ Eight hundred pupils have received instruction from my lips, preparatory for college, and for business, sixty of whom have already entered the ministry.”

On his eightieth birth-day, he said to his people, that he could “ hear, see, and speak with the facility of early manhood, and had never been confined to his bed, or his room, by sickness, a single day, for threescore and fourteen years.”

He still reads without the aid of spectacles ; in epistolary intercourse holds the pen of a ready writer, while his clear chirography might put to shame much of the fashionable illegibility.

Half a century since, a detachment from his church and people, departed amid prayers and blessings to form a colony in Central Ohio. Forty-six days of travel, brought them to their home in the then unbroken wilderness. Beneath a spreading tree, through whose almost

leafless branches the November winds made bleak accompaniment to their hymns of praise, their first sabbath-worship was held. Now this fair daughter, bearing also the name of Granville, in vigorous beauty, surpasses the mother.

Thither, the aged pastor, in the course of the past year, was induced to journey, and received a patriarch's welcome. During the last few months, the sixtieth anniversary of his marriage, has been celebrated, at the request and under the auspices of his attached parishioners. Four generations gathered around the venerable pair; gratulatory letters poured in from the absent, while the pleasant union of conversation, refreshments, music, and giving of thanks, made this festival one of the bright resting-places of memory.

The Rev. Daniel Waldo, at the age of ninety-three, has regularly officiated during the past year, as Chaplain to Congress, discharging the duties of his sacred office with zeal and acceptance. He has enjoyed the large national library, the varied and distinguished society, and other advantages of his unsought position, with the

earnestness and enthusiasm of earlier years. An auspicious augury is it, when at the Court of any nation, reverence is accorded to the "hoary head, found in the way of wisdom."

Probably the oldest active minister in New England, and one of the oldest in the world, is the Rev. Mr. Sawyer, of Maine, who if he sees the harvest-moon of the present year (1856,) fill her horn, will have completed a century. Seventy-five years has he been an assiduous servant in his Master's cause, and enjoyed almost uninterrupted health. He lately visited and preached at Hebron, in Connecticut, his native place, which he left when a boy of twelve. He has also recently made a pleasant tour in the Granite State, beneath the shadow of whose lofty White Mountains, he commenced his youthful labors. Surprisingly does he retain his early vigor, preaching once or twice on the Sabbath, with a clear voice, sufficient to fill the largest churches.

One who heard him close the exercises at the Commencement of a Theological Seminary, the last year with prayer, mentions with admo-

ration, his fine strong tones, and the earnest love with which he poured forth, as if from the soul's depths, his reverence for God, his gratitude for a Savior, and his desires that the gospel might irradiate every dark spot upon the earth.

“Not the slightest of the attractions of the house where I was entertained,” says the reporter, was the society of a model Christian gentleman, Deacon Adams, whose sight is not dim, nor hearing dull, nor natural force abated, though he lacks only some 15 years, to bring him to the date of his aged minister. Twenty years more would bring him to that of Moses.”

“After all, Moses would not have seemed so very old, down here in Maine. Father Sawyer and Deacon Adams, would not think much of his extra 20 or 30 years. Indeed, from a little incident that occurred, I should think that such patriarchs got quite accustomed to living. A minister in his prime, said to the former, “If you preach a sermon on your hundredth birthday, I'll be there to hear you.” “How do you know you'll be alive then,” was the quick

repartee of that bright-minded patriarch, standing on the verge of his second century."

An interesting jubilee was held in the open air, a summer or two since, amid the romantic scenery, and wild mountains of Wales, to commemorate the settlement of the Rev. D. Williams, at Breconshire. After introductory services, one of the numerous clergymen present, came forward, and requested his acceptance of various appropriate gifts, with the congratulations of their donors. Large additions to his library, and no inconsiderable accession to his salary came on that day, from the half-pastoral, half-agricultural people, where for fifty years he has labored with stainless reputation, and unwavering popularity. Still hale and vigorous he stood among them, able to preach thrice on a Sabbath, without fatigue, and as the clear sunlight beamed upon him through the chequering branches, and the air which was purity itself, stirred his locks, he seemed the personification of healthful and serene happiness. The people over whom he presides, have had but three clergymen for 160 years, and it is a

significant fact that they have enjoyed during that period, uninterrupted peace and harmony. His amiable and pious consort, for half a century his helper and friend, was not forgotten, but shared in the liberal tokens, and heart-felt attentions of the festival.

Being what is called in that primitive region, a pluralist pastor, and the country, one of volcanic formation, the yearly labor of travelling to meet the necessities of his scattered flock, involves both fatigue and risk. Yet during the 2600 Sabbaths which his fifty years have comprehended, it was stated that he had never once been disabled from preaching, or excused himself from any call of duty. By us, nurtured amid smooth roads, or flying at will in the rail-car, it would be impossible to conceive the toils of traversing that mountainous country, with its bridgeless streams, its foaming torrents, its narrow, winding, declivitous paths, often made invisible by mist and snow. Yet no tempest has kept at home on the Sabbath, or withheld from the out-door gatherings in North or South Wales, the apostle of Breconshire.

To meet these requisitions for half a century, it is computed that he must have spent some years in the saddle. Fifteen hundred from amid that sparse population, has he gathered into the fellowship of his church.

A spectator of this commemorative festival, says :

“It was impossible to look at him, surrounded by forty of his younger brethren in the ministry, without mingled feelings of admiration and pious gratitude. Physically, as well as mentally, he was formed for his profession. His broad chest, and voice, even now powerful, make the utterance of hours easier to him than breathing to many public speakers. His sermons have been always prepared with great care, and delivered with unfaltering fluency, and a glow of enthusiasm. There he stood, after a campaign of fifty years, against an evil world, with an unblemished name, and lips whose eloquence no inconsistency had silenced. Honor to the brave old man, and praise to the grace of God, which has made him what he is.”

Though these selections from the ranks of aged divines, which are so pleasant to contemplate, must be accounted rather as exceptions, yet their number sanctions the conclusion that the sacred profession is not inauspicious to longevity. It would also seem, from the investi-

gation of rather a limited sphere, that length of days had been more frequently attained, where the excitements of change of position, and the trial of uprooting pastoral affections had been as far as possible avoided.

To many ancient servants of the altar, the active usefulness of earlier days is not accorded. Still, is it in their power to benefit man, and to honor God. Rest, as well as labor, He is able to make profitable. The meekness with which they resign employments and efforts once so dear, and the cheerfulness with which they turn to remaining comforts are salutary examples to the younger traveller. Their virtues, day by day, reiterate and make plainer on the map of life, the narrow way to the celestial city. Their secret influence is as a purifying breath to the moral atmosphere. By the silent eloquence of holiness they still lead in the way of righteousness. The gentle and solemn memories of many years sublimate their spirits, while their chastened expectations surround them with a deeper tenderness of love.

No frost of age
May blight their pure example, or impair
Those fruits, which mid the tears and clouds of time,
Mellow to Heaven's own hue.

“Oh how comely is the wisdom of old men, says the son of Sirach, “much experience is their crown and the fear of God their glory.”

For those who sustained by blessed recollections, calmly wait the Divine will, the metaphor of a fine writer has peculiar significance :

“The years of old age are stalls in the Cathedral of life, for the gray haired to sit in, and listen, and meditate, and be patient till the service is over, and so get themselves ready to say *amen* at last, with all their hearts and souls.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Cheerful Old Women.

“Say! wherefore sigh for what is gone?
Or deem the future all a night?
From darkness through the rosy dawn,
The stars go singing into light:
And to the pilgrim, lone and gray,
One thought shall come to cheer the breast,
The evening sun but fades away,
To find new morning in the west.”

T. B. READ.

Cheerful Old Women! Yes, to be sure, that is very proper: and why not *cheerful old men* also? Is not that amiable temperament fitting for both?

No doubt. Yet it seems expressly incumbent on those to whom home-happiness is confided. Gloom is very inconsistent with that

science. If its elements have been acquired, and some commendable progress made in early life, it would be unwise and inconsistent to abandon them at its close.

Women wish to make themselves agreeable. There is no harm in that. It is a part of their nature. But how do they expect to continue so, when the attractions of youth forsake them?

If they once possessed beauty, it may have become a matter of tradition, of which the observer is incredulous. The elegance of manners for which they were praised of old, may now be deemed antiquated, for there are fashions in manners as well as in dress. What are they to do then, in order to avoid being disagreeable?

Let them make trial of the temper that looks on the bright side of things. Let them put on the spectacles that discern the bright side of character. The smile of such a temperament is always admired. There is no Old School, or New School about that. Like the pure gold of patience, it grows brighter for using.

Life with all its trials, is very much what we

choose to make it. We may go complaining all our days, or singing the heart song :

“Simply *to be*
Is a joy to me,
For which my God I bless.”

I have known many of my own sex, who eminently cultivated this sunny spirit. Among them, I think at this moment of the only sister of Wordsworth, for whom the voice of mourning has recently gone up from the beautiful regions of Grassmere and Helvellyn. Amid exquisite scenery with a soul attuned to all its loveliness, she had walked arm in arm with her loved brother for more than half a century. To him, her unfailing cheerfulness, and refined taste, were priceless treasures, and he admitted that some of the finest passages in his poems were suggested by communion with her. Destitute of his reserve and taciturnity, she had the power of charming a company of listeners, by her varied conversation, though entirely unobtrusive, and child-like in simplicity.

“A true woman, is she indeed, said Coleridge, in mind and in heart. Her person is such, that if you expected to see a pretty

woman, you might think her rather ordinary,—but if you expected to find an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty—so simple are her manners, so ardent, so impressive, and in every motion her most innocent soul beams out so brightly.”

A close observer of Nature whose changes she loved,—benevolent, affectionate, and doing good to all, Dorothy Wordsworth numbered eighty-four years, without a winter in her heart; and with the sweet sound of Rydal’s falling water, her pleasant memory mingles.

Social intercourse, is among the remedies for the ennui and inertia, which sometimes attend declining years. Thus, Mrs. Garrick, the widow of the celebrated actor, continued to be accessible and acceptable, until ninety-seven; and Miss Monckton at ninety-four, through her vivacity and good taste in dress, drew around her throngs of gratified guests, in the metropolis of England. Hannah More, after her removal to Clifton, in her eighty-fifth year, was so attractive, that the number of her visitants was computed at four hundred in the space of three weeks. Her conversational powers, charming the most elegant and refined, re-

tained all their freshness and brilliancy, while her liveliness of manner, delighted the young, and the warmth of her christian love, with the wisdom of her writings inspired all with affection and confidence.

How touchingly does she unfold the secret of this cheerfulness, as she approached the close of life :

“ *When and whither*, belong to Him, who governs both worlds. I have nothing to do but to *trust*. I bless God that I enjoy great tranquility of mind, and am willing to depart, and be with Christ, whenever He shall call. I leave myself in His hands, who doeth all things well.”

“ I have seen the better part of the race of life,” said a distinguished writer, at the age of seventy-four. Of the little that remains, I endeavor to make the best. On the whole, I am rather surprised that I have scrambled through it as well as I have. That I have lived on good terms with so many good people, gives me about as much pleasure as any other reflection.”

Philosophers have called woman the “ *home teacher*.” If she accepts this distinguished office, she should renounce an inanimate, and mournful deportment. The best precepts lose their force if lugubriously uttered. Aged people of a pleasant countenance and cheerful

voice have great power in winning the affections of children. The infant stretches its arms to its grandparents, and little forms cluster around the chair of the silver-haired storyteller.

The gentler sex have a great resource in age, from their varieties of interesting domestic employment, and especially the uses of the needle.

“I wish I could sew,” said the Rev. Sidney Smith. “I believe one reason why women are generally so much more cheerful than men, is, because they can work with the needle, and so endlessly vary their employments. I knew a lady of rank, who made her sons do carpet-work. All men ought to learn to sew.”

The simple forms of feminine industry, are surely favorable to serenity of spirit, as well as conducive to respectability and comfort. A lady of eighty-four, in one of the smaller towns of Connecticut, found great pleasure from these unostentatious pursuits. During one year, she completed with her quiet knitting-needles, forty-eight pairs of stockings, besides constructing from fragments of calico, two large bed-quilts, one of them comprising more than three thousand separate pieces, symmetrically arranged.

These fabrics were principally for the accommodation and relief of needy persons,—so that with the peaceful consciousness of time industriously improved, was blent the still higher satisfaction of benevolence. Was not this a gainful exchange for the lassitude, and suspicious sense of uselessness, which is sometimes permitted to gather like rust over advanced years, or like a cancer to eat away their remaining vitality?

This good woman might seem to have constantly kept in view, the old Arabian proverb, “the idle are not to be classed among the living; they are a peculiar kind of *dead*, who can never be buried.”

A part of the regimen that promotes cheerfulness, may be thus simplified :

Make the best of everything,
Think the best of everybody,
Hope the best for yourself.

Aged women of a sunny spirit, retain a decided influence on those around them. Lady Strange, whose husband did so much for the encouragement of the fine arts in England,

somewhat more than a century since, so far from underrating what time had spared, thus remarks in a letter to one of her female friends.

“My health is excellent. My cheeks have still some bloom. I have two of my own teeth, and several brown hairs in my head. I might have been able to dance at any of my children’s weddings. Is not this a tolerably satisfactory condition at eighty-four?”

During the long absences of Sir Robert from his native land in the earlier years of their union, she zealously and economically took charge of a large family, bringing up the boys with a judicious energy, and cheering her husband by the pen, to “endure as patiently as possible the privations of absence. Keep fully in mind, all the blessings that you enjoy. Weak health may be helped, if due care is attended by cheerfulness, that best of medicines. Cheer up your heart, our situation has still many causes of thankfulness to God.”

After her death which took place at her own house, in her 88th year, it was said by an accurate judge, that “at this late period she re-

tained all the activity of a vigorous mind, that her lively, interesting conversation, would be remembered and regretted by a large circle of acquaintance, and that she continued to unite the vivacity of youth to the dignity of age. Her whole life was usefully employed for the benefit as well of her own family, as that of those in whom she took a benevolent interest. Equally distinguished was she by purity of morals, and integrity of principles, as for excellence of understanding."

Yet it is not necessary to cross the ocean, or explore foreign lands for examples of women, who have illumined long life by an unclouded spirit. Many such will be readily recalled, and among them one, over whom the tomb has but recently closed, Madam Susan Johnson, of Stratford, Connecticut.

"I had visited her, only a little time before her death, said a friend, in the lovely village of her residence. In the full enjoyment was she, of every faculty, at the advanced age of eighty-four. She retained an unimpaired memory, and kept up a constant and elegant correspondence with her friends, until within a few days of her death. She was looking toward approaching spring with pleasant anticipation, for though life's winter was

upon her, she delighted in the carol of birds, and the changing beauties of every season, watching them as in by-gone days, and sharing cheerfully the joys of those around her, as in times of old."

Quite recently also, has passed away, Mrs. Abigail Leonard, of Abington, Connecticut, having almost reached her ninety-third birth-day. She retained her physical and mental powers in healthful action until life's close. She was fond of reading and conversing, and nourished her activity by a habit of performing some useful labor every day. Industry was her enjoyment. Many tokens of this, has she left among friends and acquaintances, as pleasant memorials. They can show the garments, and other articles she took such pleasure in making while still among them. A christian Dorcas was she, and her works praise her. Ever amiable and bright-spirited, she delighted to converse on cheering and instructive themes, and especially as she drew near her final transition, to speak to her Pastor, high and holy words of that country where she was to find a home, and of those skies which have no need of either sun or moon to give them light.

Among those matrons who have nobly sustained the hardships of settling our new Western States, was one who emigrated during the last century to the wilds of Illinois. A large family did she bring up, and extended the helping hand and loving smile to her great grand-children even to the verge of fourscore. A model was she of useful industry. Scarcely ever would you see her seated, without the needle, or knitting-needles in busy exercise. By her side, also, on a little table, were ever lying her Bible, pen and ink. For the last thirty years of life, her spirit was so much soothed by the melody of rhyme, that she seldom passed a day without composing a few verses. She never mentioned them to others, but linked the harmonies of thought and sound, of which the following is a specimen, as a source of solitary satisfaction, and a sweetener of the spirit.

“ All eyes on one Creator wait,
The rich, the poor, the mean, the great,
The ignorant, and wise,
All on one common father call,
The universal Lord of all,
Sovereign of earth and skies.

“ Yet how ungrateful mortals prove,
 To him who is the Lord of Love,
 Nor trace the hand Divine ;
 O'erlook the guardian love and care,
 Nor render praise nor offer prayer,
 Forgetful they are thine.

“ Lord, may this thought be deep imprest
 Upon the tablets of my breast,
 Thy mercies still my song
 At sober eve, at morning light,
 And through the watchful hours of night,
 I would the theme prolong.

“ Dear to my soul shall be thy praise ;
 Tho' poor and weak the song I raise
 It would to Thee aspire,
 O teach to pray, to praise adore,
 To love, to reverence more and more,
 Impart celestial fire.”

Mrs. Esther Edwards, of Windsor, Connecticut, illustrated somewhat more than a century since, what woman may perform in her own peculiar province, with an unbroken, unclouded spirit. Having accepted in early youth, the station of the wife of a pastor, she imbibed the idea that it was her duty to release him wholly from all participation in domestic care. To her

high-toned and unselfish mind, it seemed that he who had undertaken the guidance of immortal souls, ought not to be annoyed by the daily questions of earth, "what shall we eat? what shall we drink? and wherewithal be clothed?" On this principle she commenced and continued to act. Neither was it a quiet utterance of "be ye warmed, and be ye filled;" nor the simple ordering of obedient servants, that could accomplish her purpose. In village life, such was then the equality of condition, that the help of subordinates was not easily obtained, or habitually depended upon. Every repast, and every garment, must have not only the providing thought, but the aiding hand of the mistress; the minister's family must of course, be a pattern to all, and his restricted salary was expected to sustain a free hospitality. The thoroughness of New England housekeeping, and the determination to avoid all pecuniary indebtedness, which was then an essential part of every honest education, involved both personal labor and rigid economy. Head, hands and feet, were alike taxed.

Yet nothing daunted, she who in these days, would have been counted in age but as a school girl, came modestly and bravely forward, girded with the love of her husband, and the fear of God. Blessed with a good physical constitution, and a superior intellect, she failed not, fainted not. The simplicity of primitive times favored her, which required no elaborate costume, or ceremonious visiting, or luxurious appointment. Hence, she had more time for the training of her many children, which she deemed of unspeakable importance. She moved among them as a spirit of life and light. Requiring of them that implicit obedience which was the first lesson of life in the olden time, she looked upward for the wisdom she needed for their future guidance, wearing on her brow the sweet trustful spirit of the supplication; "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

Her illustrious son, President Edwards, who was educated at home, until his entrance at college, in recording his filial obligations, delighted to pay her a tribute of heartfelt praise. It has been remarked by some of his biographers,

that intercourse throughout the whole of scholastic training, with mother and sisters, the latter of whom also pursued a course of study under their father's supervision, contributed to the benignity and domestic tenderness, that mingled with his strength of intellect. Ten daughters well instructed, and fitted to perform whatever appertains to woman's sphere, attested her maternal fidelity. During her sixty-three years of conjugal duty, she never neglected mental improvement, or sacrificed progress in knowledge. On these, she depended still more for solace, after the eclipse of widowhood fell upon her heart and house. For a very long period, it had been her custom, to keep upon her parlor-table, a Bible, with some standard works of History, Biography and Theology, divested of controversy. Thither, at a specified hour of each afternoon, came the neighboring ladies, both old and young. First, a passage of Scripture was read, then a portion of the volume which was in consecutive perusal, which their revered friend and guide interspersed with remarks or illustrations, readily

suggested by her extensive knowledge, or profound experience. The happy influence of such a habit on the intelligence of those around, it is not easy to compute ; and many in the morning of life, referred their first serious impressions to words thus falling from those aged lips.

Looking with a cheerful temper upon every creature, and all mutations below, her life drew on, in usefulness and honor, to the extreme period of ninety-nine years. Its wheels moved with music, until they were "broken at the cistern, and the golden bowl" filled with the waters of immortality.

Modifications of physical infirmity, are prone to attend advancing years. They should be expected, and if not welcomed as guests, serenely tolerated. There is often amid these decays, a kind of compensation in the dealings of Nature, a giving on one side, for what she takes on the other.

"I am delighted, said an eminent physician, with this rheumatism in my knee, for now some other complaints that I had, will vanish before it. We constantly perceive in the course of our medical practice, one disease counteracting or destroying

another, so that the superintending care and wisdom of God is as manifest in the theory of indisposition, as in that of health."

This occult science, is but too little studied, and the laws of health, with that cloudless spirit which is the sister of health, are too often neglected. Still, were I permitted, with full scope, and a free pencil to enter the gallery of living portraits, many might be selected where silver hairs, and a furrowed forehead, are in unison with dignity, cheerfulness, and grace.

I think at this moment, of one, from whom the Atlantic divides us, in whom these lineaments are strikingly prominent. Madam R., a native of our own clime, but a resident by marriage, for more than half a century, in the Mother Land, retains at ninety-three, not merely the capacity of pleasing, and being pleased, but undiminished delight in domestic and social duties. That practical science which promotes the comfort of home, she still pursues as a source of happiness, and notwithstanding her great age, regularly adds to her household-book, the items of daily expenditure, as in her vigorous prime. In conversation, she evinces remarkable spright-

liness, and even brilliance of repartee. Her fine, erect person, seems to be rendered more attractive, by the perfect neatness and simplicity of costume, peculiar to the sect of Friends, of which she is a member. This naivete, with the kindness, of which it is an expression, charms the young, and promotes good-humor in all around.

Her charities are constantly active, both in liberal bounties, and those slighter sunbeams that brighten the current of human life. During her walks in those parks that revivify the great heart of London, it is delightful to see her distributing to the children whom she meets, some appropriate gift, lighting up the wondering smile upon their innocent faces, or pausing to counsel the nurses, in what position to carry their infant charge, so as least to constrain their delicate limbs, and heighten as much as possible, the benefits of air and exercise. Love of the little ones, so frequently an element of happy old age, is a conspicuous trait in her nature, and may be traced in the following extempor-

neous morceau, sent with the Christmas gift of a thimble, to one of her juvenile descendants :

“ Dear Minnie, 'tis a pleasant thing
To use the busy thimble ;
I fancy I can see you now,
With fairy fingers nimble
Preparing for your doll a dress,
Against the Christmas-day,
When we appear in all our best,
Why should not she be gay ?

Your Grandmama, from her arm-chair
The distance scarcely measures,
But often in a fancy-flight
Visits her living treasures,
Pleas'd to enjoy their cheerful smiles,
Or hear their laughter hearty,
And then to *No 8* returns,
To welcome her own party.”

It is unfortunate, that those who are constrained to feel the decays of time, should add a voluntary evil, that of mental depression. This tendency they ought at all points to resist. If they are compelled to resign the “ harp and organ,” and the full voice of their youthful minstrelsy, have they not still some humbler

instrument of joy, which they can tune to the chorus of God's praise?

In their efforts to preserve a happy equilibrium of spirits, they should have aid from those around. Younger, fresher sentinels should keep watch with and for them. Self-derogation is their besetting sin. Pleasant statements of passing incidents, should be daily made them, to nourish the life of sympathy, and keep it in healthful connection with the outer world. Has the eye grown dim? Let the interesting page, be rendered vocal, by lips of love. Has the ear become wearied? Let the sweetly, distinct elocution, with a sustained but not too elevated tone, keep the heart from relapsing into solitude and silence.

The young are not aware, what a charm such attentions and services cast around them. The higher class of minds are more moved by them, than by the brief blaze of beauty. An accomplished gentleman, and critical observer, on his return from foreign travel, was asked to which of the fair ladies whom he constantly met in elegant society, he should give the preference.

He designated one, who, among the reigning belles, had no distinction, giving as a reason—

“She is sweetly attentive to her hoary, and sickly grandmother. She will make a good wife.”

Smiles, and words of approval, are medicines to the aged. They are not in danger from flattery, as at earlier periods of life. They are often painfully unassured of their acceptance with the new generation among whom they linger, as pilgrims and strangers. To suggest a becoming costume, or notice whatever is agreeable in conversation or style of manner, gives them confidence in their social relations. To refer to their opinion, or advice, is useful in keeping their judgment in exercise, as well as a proper tribute to their experience. Above all, never permit them to believe that their counsel, or company, are of little account. This gives strength to their chief temptation. The belief that they are considered supernumeraries, drives them to become superannuated. I hope no filial heart may be moved to compunction, by the following graphic sketch from a maternal pen.

“Not long since, a comely man, scarcely past his prime, inquired at our door for the clergyman. He appeared disappointed and anxious, at hearing that he was out of town, and on being questioned, replied—

“I have lost my mother. As this place used to be her home, and my father is buried here, we came to lay her beside him.”

“You have met with a great loss,” I said, moved by sympathy.”

“Well,—why yes;” answered the man. “A mother, in the general way is a great loss. But ours had outlived her usefulness. She was in her second childhood. Her mind got to be as weak as her body, so that she was no comfort to herself nor to anybody else. There are seven of us, sons and daughters. We could not find anybody, who was willing to board her, so we agreed to keep her among us, a year apiece. But I had more than my share of her, for she was too feeble to be moved, when my time was out; and that was more than three months before her death. She had been a good mother in her day, and worked very hard to bring us all up.”

“Without looking in the face of the heartless man, I directed him to a neighboring pastor and returned to my nursery. I gazed on the little faces that smiled, or grew sad, in imitation of mine, and wondered if the day would ever come when they should say; “She has outlived her usefulness. She is no comfort to herself and a burden to everybody else.” God forbid that we should outlive the love of our children!

“When the bell tolled for this poor mother’s obsequies, I went to the sanctuary to pay the only token of respect in my power to the aged stranger, for I felt that I could give her memory a tear, though the money-grasping children to whom she had ceased to be profitable might perchance have none to shed.

“Mournfully and long spoke out the church-bell, till its iron tongue had chronicled the years of the toil-worn mother. Reverberating through our quiet forests, and echoing from hill to hill, the knell continued until we had counted eighty-nine.”

“Eighty-nine! there she lies in her coffin, still and cold. She makes no trouble now, demands no love, no soft words, no tender little offices. A look of patient endurance, we fancied also an expression of grief for unrequited love sat on her marble features. Her children were there, clad in weeds of woe, and in irony we remembered the strong man’s words, “She was a good mother in her day.”

“When the bell ceased tolling, the strange minister rose in the pulpit. His form was very erect, and his voice strong, but his hair silvery white. He read several passages of Scripture expressive of God’s compassion to feeble man, and especially of his tenderness when grey hairs are on him, and his strength fail-eth. He made some touching remarks on human frailty, and dependence on God, urging all present to make their peace with Him while in health, that they might claim his promises when heart and flesh should fail them. Leaning over the desk, and gazing intently on the coffined form before him, he then said reverently. “From a little child I have honored the aged; but never till the gray hairs covered my own head, did I know truly how much love and sympathy this class have a right to demand of their fellow-creatures. Now I feel it. Our mother, “he added most tenderly,” who now lies in death before us, was a stranger to me, as are all these, her descendants. All I know of her is what her son has told me to-day—that she was brought to this town from afar, sixty-nine years ago, a happy bride; that here she passed most of her life, toiling as only mothers ever have strength to toil, until she had reared a large family of sons

and daughters; that she left her home here, clad in the weeds of widowhood, to dwell among her children; and that till health and vigor left her, she lived for her decendants."

"You, who together have shared her love and her care, know how well you have requitted her. God forbid that conscience should accuse you of ingratitude or murmuring, on account of the care she has been to you of late. When you go back to your homes, be careful of your words and your example before your own children, for the fruit of your doing you will surely reap from them, when you yourselves totter on the brink of the grave. I entreat you as a friend, as one who has himself entered "the evening of life," that you may never say, in the presence of your families nor of heaven, "Our mother has outlived her usefulness—she is a burden to us." Never, never; a mother cannot live so long as that! No; when she can no longer labor for her children, nor yet care for herself, she should fall like a precious weight on their bosoms, and call forth by her helplessness all the noble, generous feelings of their natures."

Is it to be supposed that there is in our country, a disposition to deny the just claims of age? We are not willing to admit so grave a charge upon a christian people. Whatever would seem to countenance it, probably arises from the over excited energies and haste of a young nation, intent to be rich, which amid its countless inventions, hazardous enterprises, and insatiate accumulation, overlooks the lone

and the silent, the slow in speech, and the slow of action.

N. P. Willis, from whose graceful pen we have heretofore quoted, thus feelingly remarks on this part of our subject.

“The neglected portion of the great American family is old age—we are sorry to say. Not that we as a nation are disrespectful to the old, or that they are denied or grudged anything. We perform the negative duty to them, by avoiding all which shall occasion them offence or deprivation; but we do not perform the positive duty of assiduously seeing that they occupy, always and only the places of honor and prominence; nor, more particularly, do we study to contrive, untiringly and affectionately, how to comfort, strengthen, cheer, and recuperate them. An old man in one house may have his chair in the drawing-room, and his place at the table, and be listened to when he speaks, and obeyed when he commands. But in another house he will have his easy chair cushioned and pillowed, and his arm-chair at the table, and the cook will be busied most with what will newly nourish or refresh his more delicate appetite; while all listen first for his words, and address conversation to him as a center, and eagerly seek for his commands as an authority. This, (we assure the reader, from our well weighed observation in both countries,) is a fair picture of the difference between old age in America and old age in England. We have been sad to admit this, to the commenting traveller.

It is an unconscious fault in our country—an oversight of our life too busy, our attention too overtasked, and our plans of

home and pleasure too unsettled and immature. But the feeling for better things is in us. Time will bring it into action."

What remains therefore, for this interval during which the country is getting ready to do its duty, but for the aged in general, and for old women in particular, to make themselves of as much consequence as they can? If this is a busy, calculating age, let them bring a drop or two of honey to the hive, and they will be the more regarded. If they may not as formerly, spread the wing, on wide excursions, they can cheerily greet the working-bees, when they come laden home, and tell the young ones, where the white clover grows. Habits of usefulness, varied according to the necessities of their position, and an agreeable demeanor, may be still their own. In the exercise of these, they will find comfort, until they rise to a higher estate.

It might be in accordance with the spirit of thrift that prevails in a new country, to represent cheerfulness as a matter of loss and gain. Low spirits are decidedly unprofitable. They unhinge the nervous system. They are losses in

the balance-sheet of life. "Discontent, says an ancient writer, casts a cloud over the mind. It occupies it with the evil that disquiets, instead of the means by which it is to be removed."

Among things to be avoided by cheerful old women, are vain regrets. "Would that I were young again!" is the wish sometimes uttered by lips that might be better employed. It has been well treated by a Scottish lady, Caroline Baroness Nairn, in the following lines, written when she had attained her seventy-sixth year, and must therefore be admitted as competent to judge of the question thus examined :

"Would you be young again?
 So would not I—
 One tear to memory given,
 Onward I'll hie:
 Life's dark flood forded o'er,
 All but at rest on shore,
 Say, would you plunge once more,
 With home so nigh?"

If you might, would you now
 Retrace your way?
 Wander through stormy wilds,
 23*

Faint and astray?
Night's gloomy watches fled,
Morning all beaming red,
Hope's smiles around us shed,
Heavenward—away.

Where, are the parted friends,
Once our delight?
Dear and more dear, though now
Hidden from sight.
Where they rejoice to be,
There is the land for me;
Fly time, fly speedily—
Come, life and light.

The kind and wise provision of our Heavenly Father, by which the losses or needs of the several periods of life, find substitutes or comforts, is a pleasant contemplation. Youth must lose the sleepless affection that watched over its early helplessness, but exults in the vigor that can take care of itself, and in the developed intellect that knows what to do. Love resigns the fragrance of its first flowers, but is repaid by the rich clusters, ripening beneath its leaves. Age feels its strength decline, but rests peacefully in the shadow of the filial love, that itself had

reared, inhaling mental health from the beautiful ministries of Nature.

Has the rose of June, less brilliance and freshness, than in our childhood? Is it a slighter favor than of old, to behold it, as it goes clustering up to the cottage-eaves? "Every bud grows more lovely, the song of the bird is sweeter than ever;" said a man on the verge of eighty-eight—(my own blessed father.) Ah! thus should it ever be, with those who draw nearer, to flowers that never fade, to melody that never ceases. By the daily exercise of such a spirit, should they prepare for the "exceeding weight of glory," that awaits them. Let us educate ourselves for Heaven's high bliss, by cheerfully partaking of that, which Earth yields.

Now and then we meet a person, who seems unwilling to forfeit the privileges of murmuring and wearing a sour, sad face. These but heighten the evils they deprecate. Others, from a naturally easy temperament, more readily avoid repining; yet a capacity for sustained enjoyment under the pressure of years, needs the

support of piety; a spirit in harmony with its lot and with its Law-giver.

Would it not be well for all to try to enjoy their closing day? What is the use of hanging a black pall over the setting sun? Shall we spread the wet napkin of the wicked Hazael, that smothered the kingly sleeper, to extinguish our own "life of life," while yet breath is lent us?

Rather with the armor recommended by the eloquent Apostle, "in the patience of hope, and the labor of love," would we press onward. "Wax old *in thy work*," says the son of Sirach. We will ask wisdom to do so, and to "stand in our lot, at the end of the days."

"A fine writer has said, "the ancients might call age, sad, but that is not what we christians ought to do. If any old persons think there are about them, things that might sadden them a little, let them become christians, and this melancholy will change into something like a gentle prayer, always rising from within the soul."

Every year that we are permitted to live, enhances the debt of gratitude. Yes, every full orb'd year, with its four beautiful seasons,

its twelve perfect months, its days and nights, set in rose-diamond and ebony chased with gold, are glorious gems, for the casket of eternity.

Oh Lord, our Governor! for every added year, receive our thanks. We will not hide their number, or prize them less because they are many; but taking each, as a blessed gift from Thine Hand, embalm them with the melody of praise.

CHAPTER XIV.

Westering Sunbeams.

“Argue not
Against Heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward.

MILTON.

How beautiful is the setting sun. Long lines of golden rays tremble along the horizon; crimson and purple like the banner of a king, go floating up the zenith. As a benefactor he retires from the scenes he has blessed, and through the calm twilight men tenderly remember him.

Thus should a good life draw to its close, fruitful in benefits, and glowing with reflected love, until the evening star hangs out its silver

crescent. Thus should its westering sunbeams be treasured in the grateful hearts which have been cheered by its path of radiance.

A selfish old age must be of necessity, an unhappy one. It is an indwelling with losses; lost comeliness, lost vigor, lost pleasure, lost importance among the bright and swift current of moving things. The hopeless search for what is departed, depresses the spirits and prepares them to partake in the declension that marks the body. If whatever brings the mind into bondage must impair its force,—the decay of memory, of judgment the adjunct to memory, and of self-respect which in a measure depends on both, is more likely to occur and become palpable among aged persons who think principally and permanently of themselves. It is cause for thankfulness if through the changes, the charities, or the trials of life, they have been taught to lower their own expectations from a world they are soon to leave. Salutory and lovely is God's discipline with those whose long pilgrimage is nearly finished; withdrawing the

props on which they leaned, loosening the heart-strings that were too closely or proudly earth-bound, that the Soul, ere she tries her unfettered wing, may "spring up and take strong hold on Him who made her."

It is pleasant to recall whatever of brilliance we may have seen gather around the western gate of life, and preserve it as a guiding light for the feet of others. How noble was the bravery with which the poet Dryden battled the storms of fortune, lifting an unquenched spirit like a torch amid rocks and waves. When he might through age have naturally wished to relax the pressure of literary labor, he was stimulated anew by paternal affections. Just on the verge of his seventieth year he was apprised of the approaching return of his son from Rome, in a feeble state of health; and though he had scarcely completed the task of preparing the second edition of his translation of Virgil for the press, he took no breathing time, but immediately contracted to supply a bookseller with ten thousand verses, at sixpence a line, saying

pathetically of his invalid child, "I can not spend my life better than in preserving his."

Among the men, who taking in their hand, "their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor," gave signature to the Magna Charta of our national freedom, quite a number were appointed to length of days, with unfaded renown.

Of this band of fifty-six, some of whom, in the course of our Revolution, encountered danger, as well as loss, it seems remarkable that ten should have survived to between eighty and ninety, and four to between ninety and an hundred.

The Honorable Charles Carroll of Carrolton, Maryland, attained the greatest age, and long after his compeers had departed, lingered to witness the growth of the liberties which they had planted under the storm-cloud. He had received many advantages for the acquisition of knowledge, having been taken to Europe at the age of eight and placed under accomplished instructors. After a collegiate course in France, and the study of Law in England, he returned

to his native land at twenty-eight, a finished scholar and gentleman.

His powerful pen was early used in defence of the endangered States,—and a series of Essays published at an important crisis, had influence in arousing the zeal of patriotism, and aiding its successful result.

Many offices of honor were appointed him in his own State, as well as those of Member of Congress, and Senator of the United States, in all of which he evinced high integrity and ability. His clearness of judgment, extensive learning and decision of character, gave weight to the opinions he advocated, and the course he pursued.

At sixty-three, he chose to retire from public toils and distinctions. Then, his love of domestic and social intercourse, his vivacity of temper and refinement of taste, shone forth without a cloud. Pilgrimages were made by strangers, to see in his own nobly, hospitable mansion, this patriarch of the patriarchs. There, surrounded by his descendants, to the third generation, and venerated by all, on the

14th of November, 1832, he ceased to live, falling short only three years, of a complete century.

The Honorable William Ellery of Newport, who from the memorable era of 1776, continued nine years a member of Congress, afterward took his seat as chief justice of the superior court of Rhode Island. When the age of seventy released him from this office, he accepted that of collector of customs for his native city, affectionately serving her till the day of his death, which took place at the age of ninety-three. So social and agreeable was he, notwithstanding his advanced age, and such powers of vivid and graphic narration did he continue to possess, that the young sought his company for their own pleasure.

It was on the morning of his death, February 15th, 1820, that his family physician called, not professionally, but as a friend, to enjoy for half an hour his delightful society. In his usual health, he was seated in his arm-chair, reading Cicero de Officiis. But while the tide of conversation flowed freely and brightly on, the

quick eye of the medical man detected a change in his venerated companion. He was laid upon the bed, but resumed reading the page which was interesting him when his friend entered. Gently the pulse ceased its motion, and the unclouded mind glided from its tenement of clay. Deep humility of spirit was the gift of this extraordinary man, and a firmness in duty, not influenced by human applause or blame. The wheels of life moved more calmly, and perhaps longer, from the serene temperament of his religion, which under every obstacle or misfortune solaced his own soul and that of others with the sublime precept, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice."

The sunbeams of usefulness have sometimes lingered to a late period around the heads of those who had taken part in the pioneer hardships of our new settlements. I think now of one, but recently deceased, at the age of eighty-five—Judge Burnett, who was numbered among the founders of Ohio, that state which sprang from its cradle with the vigor of a giant. After the completion of his classical and legal

studies, he exchanged his fair ancestral home in New Jersey for a residence at Cincinnati, then in its rudest stages of development. As he climbed the steep river-bank he saw only scattered cabins, a few framed buildings and a log fort, marking the frontier of civilized life. Conforming his habits to those of an unrefined community, and claiming but a few physical comforts, he exercised his profession in the courts of Detroit and Vincennes, when traveling was by bridle paths, by blazed trees, fording wild streams and camping on the wet ground. Educated in the school of Washington and of Hamilton, who were honored guests at his father's house during the forming period of his life, he nobly dispersed around him the wealth of an upright and polished mind. By persevering industry and moral and religious worth, he won general confidence: and in due time a seat in the senate of the United States, and upon the bench of the supreme court of Ohio, attested the respect of the people. Population spread around him like the pageantry of a dream, and Cincinnati, among whose rudi-

ments his manly hand had wrought, echoed ere his departure to the rushing tread of 130,000 inhabitants. His health had been originally feeble, but the endurance of hardship, and what is still more remarkable, the access of years, confirmed it. At more than fourscore he moved through the streets with as erect a form, an eye as intensely bright, and colloquial powers as free and fascinating, as at thirty. When full of knowledge and benevolence, and with an unimpaired intellect, he passed away, it was felt that not only one of the fathers of a young land had fallen, but that one of the bright and beautiful lights of society had been extinguished.

Of Daniel Webster it was affirmed that the clearness of his own great mind continued to increase and to flow forth with even a fuller radiance at seventy, than in his prime. Like the reformer Wycliffe, he was more and more "intent upon being understood, intent upon imparting the conviction or passion of his own mind to other minds." With this singleness of purpose, and power of truth, was also

mingled a depth of feeling, scarcely indicated by his massive form and majestic deportment. "Yet," said an old man of more than eighty, who had long intimately known him, "he could sympathize with all. Ever had he a kindly word for the child, the youth, and him of hoary hairs. He could not look upon a fair landscape or fields waving with grain, without blessing God for permitting him to live in a world so teeming with beauty." Thus, with the radiance of thought and feeling, still glowing in his deep-set eye,

"How well he fell asleep!
Like some grand river widening toward the sea,
Calmly and grandly, silently and deep,
Life joined eternity."

The capacity of the Duke of Wellington as a counsellor in all matters of state, a wise director of his own large estates, and an ornament in society, was as great at eighty-five, as during any previous period. His bodily activity and powers of endurance were also remarkable, though in boyhood his constitution was

pronounced extremely delicate. More than once I have observed with delight his arrival at the House of Lords, on some wintry morning, on horseback, when, throwing his reins to the single servant who attended him, he would proceed with vigorous step, and cheek brightened by exposure to the keen air, up those long flights of stairs, which in the old parliament building, were formidable to younger feet.

One evening he was seized while in his place, with sudden illness, like a premonition of paralysis. In leaving the house, he chanced to drop his hat, and realizing with singular clearness of mind that should he stop to regain it, the rush of blood through the brain might be dangerously quickened, passed on without it, holding his head in its usually very upright position. One of the peers, noticing his departure, anxiously followed and finding he had no carriage in attendance, induced him to accept his own, and return home. For two or three days bulletins were issued from Apsley House, to allay the anxiety of the people, with whom he was an idol. Then again appearing

in his accustomed parliamentary seat, he sustained some pending resolution with a brief and lucid speech, proving that indomitable energy and strength of will, which pervaded even the latest period of his existence.

England is still happy in the protracted light shed upon her counsels, by heads that wear the silver crown of age. At seventy-eight, Lord Brougham speaks much and well ; Lords Lansdowne and Aberdeen at more than threescore and ten, are eminent ministers of state ; and Lord Lyndhurst, the son of our own artist Copley, is in his eighty-fifth year, hale and vigorous, able to take an active part in the discussion of the most intricate public affairs, and ranked by good judges among the greatest of living orators.

Born in the same year with Lord Lyndhurst, and in the same fair city of Boston, the Hon. Josiah Quincy still exhibits unbroken powers of mind and body. The pen retains its force that traced in early life the memorial of his illustrious father, and afterward gave to our country, beside other valued works, a history

in two volumes of her most ancient seat of learning, Harvard University, over which he had himself presided with honor for more than sixteen years. The fervid eloquence which on the floor of Congress, and on so many civic occasions, cast forth its bold metaphors and coruscations of wit, is not yet extinguished. It is probably an unprecedented fact that at the age of more than fourscore, he should have been urged to accept a nomination to the mayoralty of his native city, an office which he had held thirty years before ; leaving at his retirement indelible marks of his taste and efficiency in the financial prosperity, the humane institutions, and elegant structures of this Athens of New England.

At his delightful summer residence in Quincy, superintending the minute and perfectly balanced policies of his rural domain, he entertains his guests with that fine blending of frankness and dignity peculiar to the true gentlemen of the old school. It is a pleasure to see his erect form, healthful complexion, and what is still more remarkable in our changeful

climate, an entire set of white teeth which the art of the dentist has never interpolated. Surrounded by the sweetest filial affections, the man whom the eloquent Everett has pronounced the "ornament of the forum, the senate and the academy," gracefully, exchanges the pursuits of Cicero for those of Cincinnatus.

From his fair estate at Brookline, in the vicinity of Boston, where so many have been made happy by hospitality and benevolence, has been recently transferred to a higher state of existence, Col. Thomas H. Perkins, in his ninetieth year. It was to me a source of exulting pleasure, while abroad, to meet him arriving in London, with unalloyed spirits, an energetic and excellent traveler, both by sea and land, though then on the confines of fourscore. The voyage, from which so many young persons shrink, was to him no obstacle; indeed, he afterward repeated it, enjoying the changeful and boisterous scenery of ocean, as when in his prime.

His munificence, with its living rays, brightened until life's sunset. His sympathies for the sightless had been expressed by such large

bounties, among others, the gift of a mansion, valued at forty thousand dollars, that the institute for their instruction was incorporated by the name of the "Perkins Asylum for the Blind." Truly was it said of him by Mr. Stevenson, at an assemblage of the merchants of Boston, whose profession he had so honorably represented throughout a long life :

"Literature, science and art, each received his homage and his sacrifices ; but his chosen altar was in the temple of charity. No story of distress fell upon his ear, without making his manly heart throb to the overflow of tears. It was not weakness, but greatness in him. Those tears were the mingled offspring of sorrow and of joy ; sorrow for suffering, and joy that he could do something to alleviate it.

" 'His full heart kept his full hand open.' "

A touching scene occurred in Faneuil Hall, the year previous to his death. Daniel Webster, speaking there with fervid eloquence, of the liberal aid that had been rendered to the cause of education, morality, want and woe, by

the affluence of Boston, alluded personally to the venerable Colonel Perkins, then seated near him on the platform.

“Will he rise at my request,” he exclaimed, “and show his benevolent countenance to the people?”

He who had been of old distinguished by a lofty form and kingly beauty, stood up in the feebleness of hoary time. Three cheers, into which the heart of grateful thousands were merged, rent the concave. And yet three more followed.

Then the great orator said with trembling lip:

“God bless him! He is an honor to his city, an honor to his state, an honor to his country. His memory will be perfumed by his benevolent actions, and go down a sweet odor to our children’s children.”

Still traversing the streets of Boston, in his eighty-fifth year, regardless of winter’s cold, or summer’s heat, may be seen the venerable missionary, the Rev. Charles Cleveland, intent on deeds of mercy. The orphan, so often

overlooked in the world's great strife, the suffering widow, the poor emigrant, with his sick stranger heart, hear, approaching their desolate attic, or dark, damp cellar, a tireless foot, and are cheered by the blessed smile of one who like the aged apostle John, has concentrated all christian duty in the precept to 'love one another.' In a school for infants, under the superintendence of his wife, he manifests continual interest, and by affectionate deportment, and kind counsel to all, without distinction of sect, shows the perpetual play of those hallowed sunbeams that repel the depression of age, and herald an unclouded day.

In the department of editorial labor, whose unresting, keen-eyed research, is rewarded in our age and country, by such immense influence over public opinion, there have been instances of the long and prosperous endurance of the severe tax it imposes, both on mind and body. Among these, the Hon. Theodore Dwight, was eminently distinguished. A native of Massachusetts, he resided the greater part of his life in Connecticut and New York,

and conducted in both of the last-named states, different weekly periodicals, for the space of half a century. He also stood a faithful sentinel at that unslumbering post, the head of a daily newspaper of large circulation, in the city of New York. His fine literary taste did not confine itself to editorial articles, but in consecutive works, as well as on the floor of Congress, he was appreciated by his countrymen. Age did not dim his intellect, or his remarkable colloquial powers. He continued to write with the same rapidity and acuteness that had marked his early prime; the messenger often taking the pages wet with ink to the waiting press. Well do I remember the radiance of his expressive black eye, when those coruscations of wit kindled, which eighty-two winters had not quelled, or when the smile of earnest friendship, or hallowed affection, lighted up a face beautiful to the last.

The gentler sex have occasionally adventured into the arduous and responsible post of Editor; and among these, Mrs. Ann Royal continued to conduct a paper in the city of Washington, with

an unclouded spirit, until the age of eighty-five. In the same city, the venerable Editors of the "National Intelligencer," continue unimpaired their professional toils. Col. Seaton, who mingles with indefatigable industry, a singular urbanity, has received among other marks of popular favor, repeated elections to the mayoralty; and his associate, Mr. Gales, with his still bright eye and expansive benevolence, has been characterized by a discriminating pen, as "a politician without seeking office, and a statesman, without holding it."

Col. Green, one of the earliest Editors, who gave Connecticut her weekly "folio of four pages," is still clear-minded, and full of happiness in his ninetieth year,—and Col. Ward, who at the same great age, retains after a life of active business, a memory wonderfully tenacious of dates, facts and historical incidents, are among the most interesting representatives of the past, that Hartford can boast. The same pleasant city, numbers with its most honored dwellers, Chief Justice Williams, who veils profound learning, with true humility, and on the thresh-

old of fourscore, is ready with the bright smile, and earnest voice of early years, to promote every work of benevolence, patriotism, or piety.

For still, to all of human-kind, a friend,
And ne'er from paths of equity enticed,
He skills with heavenly alchemy to blend
The lore of Themis, with the Cross of Christ.

Among the most genial spirits of the age, is the venerable Dr. John W. Francis of New York. Time seems to have levied no tax on his enthusiasm in intellectual pursuits, in friendship, or in charity. The Mentor of his profession, he warmly extends to the young medical practitioner, the helping hand, or the word of encouragement. The oldest member of the Historical Society of the Empire city, his authority is decisive as an antiquarian, so vast and precise are his retentive and recollective powers. He is a writer of versatility and force, a favorite in literary circles, while his conversation and manners are replete with such a glow of feeling, as sets the frosts of age at defiance.

In every grade and occupation are some-

times found instances of protracted usefulness, mingling with that hopeful, cheerful temperament, which is supposed to appertain to the earlier periods of life. This is illustrated in the following extracts from one of those letters with which Grant Thorburn, the octogenarian florist, occasionally interests the public, through the medium of our various periodicals.

NEW YORK, February 18, 1854.

“This day I enter on my eighty-second year; my health as good, my appetite as good, I relish my food as well, and I sleep as well, as when in my thirtieth year; and for this, I *thank* the *Giver* of all *Good*. The sceptic may sneer and the fool may laugh, it is but the crackling of thorns under a pot. You may call this egotism, or any ism that you please, but I think that ingratitude is worse than the sin of witchcraft. ‘What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?’

“For the last sixty years, I have been only one day confined to my dwelling by sickness. Seventeen of these summers were spent in the city, when yellow fever, like a Turkish plague, made our streets desolate, and strong men dropped like grass beneath the scythe of the mower. The doctors of law, physic, and divinity, the board of health, the mayor and the ancient men of the city, all affirmed that the fever was contagious. If so, I have a higher power than *Chance* to thank for the preservation of myself and family; for neither my wife, myself, nor any of my thirteen children, were ever affected by this fatal dis-

ease. The exemption was the more remarkable, as I spent much of my time in the 'chambers of death and at the sick bed of the dying.

“In the dreadful fever of 1798, from the 15th to the 22d of September, I had seven patients. They lay in three different wards near half a mile apart. I traveled day and night, from one house to another, they having none to give them a cup of cold water, myself excepted. Four of them died; three recovered; thousands died alone.

“I will narrate in eighty minutes my journey of twice forty years through the wilderness of this world. Many, and full of *good* have been the days of my pilgrimage. When I left Scotland in April, 1794, I was in my twenty-second year. The amount of my education was to read the Bible and write my own name. Previous to this, I had never been twenty miles from the house wherein I was born, and, with regard to men and their manners, I was as ignorant as a babe.

“The first night I slept on shore in America, was on the 17th of June, in an open garret, with my head within eighteen inches of the *shingle roof*, my ship's matrass spread on the floor. The night was hot. A thunder storm arose at midnight—the rain descended—the floods beat on the frail roof, and great was the terror of my heart. The lightning flashed, the thunder rolled; I had never seen or heard the like in Scotland, and I wished myself at *hame* again. Sleep fled from mine eyes, and slumber from my eyelids. I rose at daybreak—head-ache, heart-ache—and my spirits sunk down to my heels. Being a stranger, I was loth to disturb the family by going forth so early; to amuse two listless hours, I opened my case of books to spread them on the floor; as they had been fourteen weeks in the hold of the ves-

sel, I feared they were mildewed. On the top, lay a small pocket Bible; it was placed there by the hands of my pious father. I opened the book. "My son," met my eye. For a moment, I thought my father spoke. I read to the end of the chapter—it was the third of Proverbs. It is near sixty years since that morning, but, at every cross-road, when not knowing whither to turn, to the right hand or the left, on referring to this chapter, I found written, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

* * * * *

"Whether I shall see another birth-day, or whether I shall see another Sabbath, it matters not. I know He will keep what I have committed to his charge."

It would be well if cheering social intercourse were more cultivated among those who share in the sympathies of many years. A lady of ninety-three, in one of the villages of Massachusetts, lately entertained at her tea-table, a party of seven friends of both sexes, whose ages ranged from seventy to eighty-six. True satisfaction and a decorous hilarity marked the festival. Much had they to say, for their united experience covered an area of six hundred and fifty years. Rural employments had probably contributed to preserve their health; for all were dwellers upon their own farms, within

the vicinity of a square mile, so that neighborly intimacy gave a zest to their intercourse, and no snows of age had been allowed to obstruct the avenues of friendship.

It is desirable that the lambent light of happiness should beam from the countenance and life of those who have long set a good example, thus making virtue attractive, and dispelling the dread which the young feel of becoming old.

Is not the parting sun beautiful in a wintry landscape? The whitened hillocks wear a faint rose-crown, and the trees glitter in their frost-work drapery, as if for a birth-night.

Does any one ask how this "house of our pilgrimage" may be illumined, when shadows steal around, and perchance, those that "look out of the windows are darkened?" Are there not some dwellings which are lighted from above? We would fain have a sky-light that shall not fail us; one that we can look up to, and be glad. We are not satisfied with a cold lustre in Memory's halls, or with a solitary star-beam.

Can we not have a fire on the hearth, when winter gathers around us? Yes, we will keep love in our hearts, while they beat, that there may be warmth, as well as radiance.

Thus, may our day of life draw toward its close. At "evening-time may it be light." In thy light, O Father of our spirits, may we see light; that walking in love here below, we may come at last, in thy good time, to that glorious world, where there is no more night, and where the sunbeam of love is eternal.

CHAPTER XV.

About Money.

Ye who hold
Proud tenantry in earth, and call your lands
By your own names, and lock your coffer'd gold
From him who for a bleeding Saviour's sake
Doth ask a part,—whose shall those treasures be,
When like the grass-blade smit by autumn-frost,
Ye fall away?

It is a mournful thought that men should become more attached to earthly possessions when about to leave them, or grasp them with so great intensity that the final separation must be forcible and afflictive.

But is this statement true? Do such cases often occur? If so, are there no remedies?

As we are creatures of habit, adhesiveness undoubtedly gathers strength from time. Since

what we have been habituated to do, or to see, becomes unconsciously interwoven with our existence, so what we have been accustomed to have and to hold, may grow closer to our hearts as life recedes, causing those who in youth were merely prudent, to be at last, the victims of avarice. Still, the extreme of this passion is not often witnessed, inasmuch as a miser is a marked creature, held up for observation and comment, both in passing life and in history.

All the subtle talents of Mazarin, were not able to gild his rapacity, or hide it from the contempt of coming ages. The solemn warning of his confessor, that to purchase peace of conscience, he must make restitution of unjust gains, failed to overcome his insatiable habit of hoarding. The frank assurance of his physician, that though but just upon the verge of sixty, the revolution of two brief moons, was the utmost limit of his days, embittered with terror both his waking and sleeping moments. Then, his two hundred millions of livres passed before him, in review, each one as dear as ever.

To enrich his relatives, the haughty family of Mancini, was probably an excuse made by the wily cardinal, for his unequalled avarice, but the root was in the love of it. Some rare gems, and peculiarly precious treasures, were placed in bags beneath his pillow. After struggles of deadly anguish, which increasing disease induced, he stretched his weak, emaciated hands to feel if they were still there. The fearful Spoiler, drawing every hour more near, he might have apostrophized in the words ascribed to one of England's great and unhappy statesmen.

“If thou be'est death, I'll give a nation's treasure,
Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.”

Other extreme cases might be cited, but this is not our object. It is rather to recommend such antidotes as are the most obvious, if we admit that avarice is a disease indigenious to life in its decline.

The first prescription would be, *pay all debts*. There is religion in it. If we are using,

or have the name of possessing anything for which the owner has not been fully remunerated, let us lose no time in rendering adequate compensation. It is better always to do without what we cannot justly afford to purchase, than avail ourselves of what literally belongs to another: and the weight of undischarged obligation, grows heavier as we draw nearer our own final account. It is at all times a clog to the free spirit, a yoke that bows down independence of thought and purpose. "Poverty without debt is independence," says an Arabian proverb. The blessed Founder of our faith, to his command to "render to all their dues," added the force of his own example, in the payment of tribute to the Roman ruler. An old author has quaintly remarked, "Even when Christ borrowed Peter's boat to preach a sermon out of, he paid him for the same with a great draught of fishes." The wise monarch of Israel attaches the epithet of wickedness to that too common forgetfulness of equity, "borrowing and paying not again." The spirit of acquisitiveness is a temptation to

vice. It confuses the simple principles of right and wrong. The fearful frauds that mark modern days, and our own country, bid us to strengthen every foundation of equity, and beware of the spirit of

“These feverish times,
That putting the *how-much* before the *how*,
Cry like the daughters of the horse-leech, *give.*”

How forcible were the words of the eloquent Patrick Henry, on his death-bed, to his children, “If I could will to give you the Christian religion, how gladly would I do so ; for with this and without any earthly possession, you would be infinitely rich : without it, though with all else that the heart can wish, you would be miserably poor.”

The apostolic injunction, “Owe no man anything, except to love one another,” gathers strength and significance, with every added year. The luxury of giving, cannot be fairly enjoyed, while debts remain unliquidated. “Be just before you are generous,” is a precept as admirable for its innate truth, as for its garb of simplicity. Punctual and cheerful payment of

wages to the laborer is a form of benevolence. To withhold hard-earned dues, or to render them churlishly, is anti-christian. A philanthropist, who in his business employed many operatives, was in the habit of paying them all at stated periods, and of adding, if possible, some kind word of counsel, saying it was a "good time to sow a good seed, when there was a sunbeam to quicken it."

Repress the spirit of accumulation. This has been said to increase with years. Yet the faculties which it calls into exercise are adverse to the tranquility which is usually coveted in life's decline. Its progress must, therefore, be traced to the force of a habit, against which reason remonstrates.

The fever of speculation, the eagerness of gain, the disappointment of loss, all the intense gradations from exultation to despair, are inapposite and hurtful to a being who cannot long partake that for which he barter so much ; and whose wisdom is rather to seek wealth in the country where he is about to dwell. The value of every species of property depends upon the

period in which it may be rendered available, or upon its probability of continuance. A bond about to expire, a house ready to fall, an estate which the mortgagee might at any moment claim, would not be coveted as investments by the prudent. To the aged all earth's possessions, being deficient in the article of *time*, which is the breath of their nostrils, are far less worthy of fervent search, than when in early prime, they were encouraged by hope to associate them with a long term of years. Such meditations, probably, induced a man of laborious and successful acquisition to say, "I will add no more to my capital hereafter; and the surplus of all my income shall be the Lord's."

Cultivate the habit of giving. This great pleasure may have been reserved for later years as a compensation for those enjoyments which time has taken away. The aged, by their position, are peculiarly solicited to make trial whether it is not better to give than to receive. Chrysotom has well said that "a man does not become rich by *laying up* abundance

but by *laying out* abundance :—that is laying it out for God.”

There is force in that quaint epitaph,

“What I saved I lost,
What I spent I had,
What I gave I kept.”

“I think I am rich enough,” said Pope, after his writings became productive, “to give away one hundred pounds a year. I would not crawl upon the earth without doing a little good. I will enjoy the pleasure of giving what I have to give by doing it while I am alive, and seeing others enjoy it. I should be ashamed to leave enough for a monument if there was a friend in want above ground.”

Many examples might be cited were time and space mine, where similar resolutions have been adopted as the motto and guide of life, until the spirit blessing all whom it met, was wafted by gratitude below, to songs of melody above. Such an one has been just removed from among us. Anson G. Phelps, Esq., of New York, who by his own unaided industry,

became the possessor of a large fortune, through untiring deeds of philanthropy kept his heart tender and open to the wants and woes of mankind. Time, money and sympathy were with him ever ready for the claims of beneficence, whether large or small. To the Being who had prospered his labors, he thus considered himself accountable, and this conscientious discharge of duty was blessed as one of his highest joys. Until more than threescore and ten years had passed over him, he attended with undiminished judgment to the concerns of a great commercial establishment, and the interests of many associated and individual forms of benevolence. Amid the sufferings and languor of decline, his mind peacefully resting upon that God whom from youth he had served, still occupied itself in plans of liberality. Within two or three days of his death, while arranging for a donation of several thousand dollars to some religious design, a beloved one expressed fear that it might too much tax his feeble strength and proposed that it should be left to the care of others, but he replied, "My busi-

ness has long been to *save that I might give*, and I wish to continue it while life lasts." More than half a million is dedicated in his will to the charities which he had long patronized, and beside other bequests to his twenty-two grandchildren, was the sum of \$5000 for each, the interest of which was to be annually devoted to deeds of religious bounty. Thus did he seek, even when he should be numbered with the dead, to lead his descendants in those paths of Christian charity which he had loved. Among the objects of philanthropy in his own city, the Asylum for the Blind had shared largely in his bounties and sympathies. Its inmates, at his frequent visits, gathered around him to take his hand as that of a father. Their thrilling and tuneful voices poured forth the tearful melody of a hymn at his thronged funeral obsequies.

"How those blind children will miss him!" said a clergyman in his address, at the church where for many years he had worshiped. "They never saw his benignant face, but they well knew the kind voice of their benefactor.

How do all the blessed affections of humanity, how do all the sacred hopes of religion, delight to hover over a good man's grave."

Another counsel which we venture to give, is to superintend personally, as far as possible, such plans of benevolence as are approved and adopted. This is true economy. We best understand our own designs. It may not always be feasible, perfectly to incorporate them with the mind of another. "He who uses the ministry of many agents, says a profound moralist, may be by some of them misunderstood and by others deceived."

Why should we not enjoy the pleasure of dispensing our own gifts? "Come, please to give us something," said a shrewd nurse to an invalid and rather parsimonious old lady; "give us all something *now* and see us look pleasant while you are alive." There was philosophy here as well as policy.

Illustrations of this position are so numerous that it is embarrassing and almost invidious to select.

The late Hon. Samuel Appleton, of Boston,

who lived to almost the verge of ninety, was distinguished by the practical efficiency of charity. The exercise of a clear judgment kept pace with his persevering liberality. In carrying out such designs as he decided to adopt, the amount of his benevolence often exceeded \$25,000 annually. So long did he pursue this blessed husbandry, that he was enabled to see ripening fruits from the germs he had planted in the sterile soil of poverty and ignorance.

It is pleasant to observe how his discriminating and unimpaired mind simply and sententiously expressed itself, in presenting a donation of ten thousand dollars to a venerated scholastic institution.

“It affords me much pleasure to have it in my power to do something for the only College in my native State, which has done so much to establish a sound literary character in the country.

“Dartmouth has done her full proportion in educating for the pulpit, the bar, the healing art, and the senate, good and great men, who have done honor to their names, to the College and the Country.

“May New Hampshire long continue to send forth from her literary emporium, men who will dispense among their fellows,

religion, law, and the other arts and sciences, in simplicity, purity, and truth."

Though few have the amount of wealth to dispense, which fell to the lot of this unwearyed philanthropist, yet the zeal which determined as far as possible, to be its own executor, is imitable. Those who trust to others, even during life, are not sure of having their plans executed. Much less can this be expected when they are dead. Agents may fail or betray. They may be absorbed with their own business and ours be delayed or forgotten. A large portion of testamentary charities perhaps never reach the most available points of the object which their donors contemplated.

The habit of promptly making their multi-form plans of benevolence available, was conspicuous in the brothers Amos and Abbot Lawrence, of Boston, those shining lights in the galaxy of goodness. One in heart, in devising and executing liberal things, they are doubtless reunited where "charity never faileth." We borrow the expressive language of one of the biographers of the elder brother, whose boun-

ties during the last ten years of his life were supposed to have amounted to half a million of dollars.

“It is known,” says the Rev. Dr. Hopkins, “that his habit of giving liberally, extended back to the period of his earliest prosperity, and kept pace with its growth. He had a sense of religious obligation, as well as a benevolent heart and with the same sagacity that governed his business transactions, perceived the tendency there is in accumulation to increase the love of money, and guarded against it.

“He did not dispense his bounty at random, nor yet by any rigid and inflexible system, that could not be moulded and shaped by the calls or aspects of each passing day.

“He aided family connections near and remote, and old friends and acquaintances. If any of them needed a few hundred dollars to help them over a difficult position, it was sure to come. But his sympathy was not limited at all to kindred or acquaintance, or in any way narrowed by sect or party. He was a true man, in sympathy with suffering humanity, and was always glad, it gave him real pleasure, to find a worthy object of his bounty. He sought out such objects. He learned histories of reverses, and of noble struggles with adversity, that were stranger than fiction. Those thus struggling he placed in positions to help themselves, furnishing them, if necessary, with sums from one hundred to a thousand dollars, or more, as freely as he would have given a cup of cold water. He visited almshouses, and hospitals, and insane asylums, and retreats for the deaf and dumb, and the blind, and became deeply interested in many of their inmates. He was watchful of every thing needed

there for comfort or for instruction, and his presence always carried sunshine with it. He distributed useful books. He aided genius, and encouraged promising talent. A true son of New England, he appreciated education, and gave his money and his influence to extend it, and to elevate its standard in every grade of our institutions, from the primary school to the College and the Professional Seminary."

The forms of benevolence change. Those objects which twenty years since were prominent, are now in a measure obsolete, or superseded by others. If we have selected one which seems fitting and feasible, let us see to it ourselves. Our heirs will probably have concerns enough of their own, and not care to be burdened with ours also.

Methinks I hear a murmured rejoinder, "there are various forms of charity I should like to patronize, but I must save for my children, and I have poor relations."

These are the keytones which covetousness has struck for ages, and with such force as often to bewilder itself. There is in them a semblance of justice and of conscience, while the root is at best a concealed selfishness. The hoarding for descendants, which at first view

seems paternal and amiable, may be hurtful to those whose benefit it contemplates. The expectation of wealth may paralyze their industry. Its possession may check their sympathies, perhaps endanger their souls. If we adopt the charity that *begins* at home, let us see that it does not become bed-ridden and *die* at home. For wherever there is one of God's family who is in sorrow, or ignorance, or needs bread or a garment, or is sick, or in prison to vice or despair, let the same be to us as our "brother and sister and mother."

The possession of property involves an obligation of stewardship, both to the Giver and to our fellow-creatures; an obligation which receding life renders more imperative and sacred. We would not stand before our Judge with rust upon our souls, derived from the gold that perishes. Of its unrighteous gathering, its unjust detention, or unkind denial to any in the hour of need, we would be guiltless in the dread day of account.

I have somewhere seen four homely rules

which comprise true wisdom, and whose observance would prevent much remorse :

- “ 1. Do all the good you can ;
2. In all the ways you can ;
3. To all the people you can ;
4. Just as long as you can.”

There are some who in their desires to do good are discouraged if they must operate on a small scale, or be bounded by a narrow circle. They erroneously associate large benefactions, with the pure element of benevolence. Such persons may be consoled by Mahomet's explanation of good deeds to our race. His definition embraced the wide circle of all possible kindness. Every good act he would say is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face is charity ; an exhortation of your fellow-man to virtuous deeds is equal to alms-giving ; your putting a wanderer in the right road is charity ; your assisting the blind is charity ; your removing stones, and thorns, and other obstructions from the road, is charity ; your giving water to the thirsty is charity. A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to

his fellow-man. When he dies, people will say, "what property has he left behind him?" But the angels will ask, "what good deeds has he sent before him?"

And now, if any of us who have together mused on this subject, realize that the time is short, let us the more strenuously fulfill deferred resolutions and undischarged duties. Let us pay what we owe, and break the slavery of money getting, and study the science of charity in the love of it, and learn the joy of being our own almoners. For to all, whether young or old, who are still seeking the good things of this transitory state, the warning of an ancient writer is appropriate :

"Build your nest upon no tree here, for God hath sold the whole forest unto Death; and every tree whereupon we would rest is ready to be cut down. Therefore, let us flee, and mount up, and make our abode among the cliffs, and dwell in the sides of the Great Everlasting Rock"

CHAPTER XVI.

The Amenities.

“He prayeth best, who loveth best.”

COLERIDGE.

It is sometimes the case, that good and kind-hearted people, imbibe on certain points, a rigidity of opinion, or an undue expectation of conformity, which is both disagreeable and inexpedient. It is a kind of despotism, against which enlightened intellect revolts. I am not ignorant that it has been numbered among the tendencies of age, though I have never observed it to be exclusively confined to that period. On the contrary, I have seen and admired in many old persons, an increase of candor, a reluctance to condemn, and a mitigation of all austerity, like the mellowing of rich fruit, ripe

for the harvest. Those amiable friends seemed to have taken the advice of the clear-minded and benevolent Franklin, not to tarry in the basement rooms of the Christian edifice, but to make haste and get into the upper chamber, which is warm with the sunlight of charity.

While we concede liberty of judgment to others, we should use courtesy in the expression of our own. It is both fitting and wise, that dissenting opinions should be wrapped in gentle speech. Were it always so, much of the bitterness of strife would evaporate, and controversies lulled into harmony, make only a stronger music to the ear of humanity.

If dogmatism has been considered a concomitant of age, in former times, it would surely be well to dismiss it in our own. The world itself has so changed its aspects, capacities and modes of action, during the last half century, that many of the conclusions which then seemed rational and well-established, must now be either reconsidered, or counted obsolete. Then, she was in a manner home-bred, and when she went abroad, it was compara-

tively with the pace of a tortoise. She sate in the evening, by the light of a tallow-candle, and read standard old books, and remembered what was in them, and who wrote them.

Now, she is in haste, and can admit but few lasting impressions. She rides on the steam, and talks by lightning. She reveals new agencies that bewilder her children, and astonish herself. Like the mystic form of the Apocalypse, she "is clothed with the sun, and hath the moon under her feet." Her "stones are the place of sapphires, and she hath dust of gold."

So many new elements, or unknown combinations, have been, or are being discovered, in this our planet, that a common, old-fashioned person could scarcely be more at a loss, on the ring of Saturn, or among the belts of Jupiter. It is no wonder that those who founded conclusions on ancient premises, should be at fault, where there is no precedent. The great principles of right and wrong, must, indeed, ever remain the same ; but the rapid movement,

and transmutation of passing objects, confuse the old modes of reasoning.

We, therefore, of the ancient regime, should forbear strongly to press preconceived opinions, and should form new ones with peculiar modesty. For we are not certain of what we once supposed was well understood, and must console ourselves with the assertion of Bacon, that "he is the wisest man, who is the most susceptible of alteration." Still, we will not embark on a sea of doubt, but regard with leniency our fellow-voyagers, as they steer their various courses, over time's troubled billows,—as we hope, toward the same great haven of rest.

Such amenities mingling with our religious belief, would repel bigotry. That we should be attached to the form of faith that has long sustained and solaced us, is natural and commendable. But if there has been ever a period in which we were inclined to think that "we alone were the people, and wisdom must die with us," it is time to dismiss the assumption. For among the many good lessons that age has taught us, should be toleration and humility.

Through much discipline and many sorrows, it instructs us that true religion is not a wall to shut out our fellow beings, nor a balance in which to weigh grains of doctrine, nor a rack on which to stretch varying opinions, nor a javelin to launch at different complexions of faith, but "peace, and love, and good-will to men." It should have enabled us to make progress in the last and highest grace, benignant and saintly charity.

Faith has been our teacher, ever since we first lisped, with childish utterance, "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Hope, as far as she draws nutriment from earth, can have little more for the aged, either in vision or fruition. But Charity, our last, most patient teacher, will ever find some beautiful precept, some holy exercise, till "this mortal shall put on immortality."

Yet though age should soften all hostilities of opinion, as the setting sun softens the landscape, there are occasionally some minds of antagonistic character, whose controversial

tastes gather strength. With them, the beauty which the gospel promises to peace-makers, is overshadowed by the ambition of controlling the opinions of others. Such ideas harmonize rather with the policy of an Israelitish usurper, than of the meek and lowly Redeemer. "Is it peace, Jehu? What hast thou to do with peace? *Turn thee, behind me.*"

But how often is the disposition and power of guiding others, associated with the most eminent liberality and love. Hear the noble suffrage of John Wesley, when advanced years had fully matured his piety.

"My soul loathes the frothy food of contending opinions. Give me solid, substantial religion. Give me a humble lover of God, and of man, full of mercy and good fruits, laying himself out in works of faith, in the patience of hope, and the labor of love. My soul shall be with such Christians, wheresoever they are, and whatsoever doctrines they may hold."

Bishop Stillingfleet asks: "Cannot good men differ about some things, and yet be good still? Yes. Cannot such love one another

notwithstanding such difference? No doubt they ought. Whence comes it then that a small difference in opinion is so apt to make a breach in affection? In plain truth it is—*every one would be thought to be infallible*; and they have so good an opinion of themselves as to make their notions and practices a rule for the world. Hence arise disputes and ill-language not becoming men or Christians. And if others have the same opinion of themselves, there must be everlasting clashings, and thence falling into parties and factions; which cannot be prevented till they come to more reasonable opinions of themselves, and more charitable and kind feelings towards others.”

Sir George Mackenzie says, “Bigotry is a laying of too much stress upon a *circumstantial* point of religion, and making other *essential* duty subordinate thereto. It obtrudes upon us things of no moment, as matters of the greatest importance. As it would be a great defect in a man’s sense to take a star for the sun, so it is a much greater error in a Christian to pre-

fer, or even to equal, a mere circumstance to the vital points of religion."

"Men who *think*, will *differ*," writes the learned Dr. Priestly, "but true Christians will ever be candid."

"I do not wish," said Rowland Hill, with his characteristic pleasantry, "the walls of separation between different orders of Christians destroyed, but only a little lowered, that we may shake hands over them."

"The nearer we approximate to universal love," said the large-minded, large-hearted Robert Hall, "the higher we ascend in the scale of Christian excellence."

The venerable President Nott, thus counsels a class of his students about to enter the ministry. "Let religious controversy alone. Let heresy alone. Preach the pure Gospel. That will be your best defence against all error."

We blame the folly of the Egyptian Queen, yet overlook their greater madness, who dissolve in the sharp acid of contention, the priceless pearl of charity, the soul's chief wealth, and casting away the substance for the symbol,

venture to stand in their reckless poverty before a Judge who requireth love, and the deeds of love, as a test of loyalty, and a shield from wrath. In His dread presence, we must all appear, and appeal only as sinners, having "left undone the things that we ought to have done, and done the things that we ought not to have done." From this parity of condition should spring brotherhood of feeling. Hand in hand let us kneel before the throne of the Pardoner.

A simple, significant incident was once related in the discourse of a Scottish divine.

Two cottagers, dwelling under the same roof, became alienated. It so happened that both were employed at the same time in thatching their tenement. Each heard the sound of the other's hammer, and saw the progress of his work, yet took no friendly notice.

But at length, as they approached nearer, they looked in each other's face and chanced to smile. That smile was a messenger from heaven. With it, came the thought how much better it would be for those who dwell under one roof, to be at peace in their hearts.

Then they shook hands. They said, "*Let us be friends,*" and a new, great happiness became theirs.

Are we not, all of us, dwellers under God's roof, and as Christians engaged in the same work? Is not the silent lapse of years bringing us nearer and nearer toward each other? Let us then press on in love, until by His grace, our thatching well done, we meet on the top at last, and learn the joy of angels.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Pleasures of Winter.

“And when the tinting of the Autumn leaves
Had faded from its glory,—we have sat
By the good fires of winter, and rejoiced
Over the fulness of the gathered sheaf.”

WILLIS.

WHAT a singular subject! The *pleasures* of winter. And what may they be? Some, with whom the imagery of frost and snow predominates, will be ready to say that it has none.

Surely it has been the most ill-treated season, decried by almost every one that could wield a pen or weave a couplet. The poets have been in league against it from time imme-

morial. Still it has some very respectable, shall I say desirable characteristics? It has not the fickleness of spring, whose blossoms so soon fall, nor the enervating influence of summer, when the strong men bow themselves, nor the imperious exactions of autumn, when the ingathering is a weariness, and may be a disappointment.

Do not speak with too much scorn of a wintry landscape. The wreaths of smoke rising high into the clear blue skies, the pure, white covering under which nature reposes, the sparkling of the sinuous streams, where the graceful skaters glide, the groups of children, gathering rosier cheeks and merrier spirits from the heightened oxygen of the atmosphere, give to a winter morning in our sunny latitude, cheering excitement.

Did you ever chance to look upon the glorious Niagara in the garniture of winter? And did not its solemn, solitary majesty, impress you more deeply, than when the green, waving woods, and the busy, gazing throngs, divided the absorbing sentiment?

Is not the wintry eve sweet, with its warm fires and bright lights, when families gather in a closer circle, and better love each other? Heart springs to heart, with fewer obstacles than in the more discursive seasons, when the foot is tempted to roam and the eye to wander. The baby crows louder after its father because it can sit longer on his knee. The youth has a lengthened tale for his lady-love, and the storm passes by unheard. Pleasant talk, and sweet song, and loud reading, vary the scene of household delights. Added cheerfulness and love are among the treasures of the wintry evening.

Shall we not avail ourselves of these hints, when the winter of life comes? Shall we not light up the cheerful lamp, and put more fuel on the flame in our cold hearts? They need not go out, though some are gone who were wont to feed them with fresh oil. We will keep love to our race, alive, till the last. Let its embers throw their warmth even into the dark valley. Yes, we will carry those embers

with us, and relight them where they can never wane or expire.

The young are said to love winter. Let us strive to make them love us, when we become the personification of winter. We will redouble our offices of kindness, and our powers of entertainment, and see if we cannot melt the ice that has collected between us.

“Young men,” says Lord Bacon, “are to be happy by hope, and the old by memory.” Yes, with us, are the pictures of the past, the winter gallery, whose landscapes fade not and whose fountains still freshly murmur. Memory! she who hath sifted and winnowed the harvest of life, that she may know the true wheat. Memory, who hath stood by us when Hope and Love have so often rung the death-knell, and forsaken us,—may we be happy through her? The Lord be thanked if it is so. If, in looking back on all the way wherein He hath led us, she presents a predominance of correct motive, of earnest obedience, of forgiven sin, let us strike that key-tone of praise which shall re-echo through eternity. Many treasured

things have indeed eluded our grasp, and faded from our sight. Yet countless blessings remain. "Was Job miserable," says Chrysostom, "when he had lost all that God had given him? No, for had he not still that God, who gave him all?"

Among the prominent joys of life's winter, are those of faith; a nearness, and shadowing forth of things unseen. It was at a festal gathering of the old and young, that the question was once proposed,—which season of human life was the happiest. It was freely discussed, with varying opinions. Then the guests decided that their host, a man of fourscore, should be the umpire. Pointing to a neighboring grove, he replied, "When vernal airs call forth the first buds, and yonder trees are covered with blossoms, I think how beautiful is spring. When summer clothes them with rich foliage, and birds sing among the branches, I say how beautiful is summer. When they are loaded with fruit, or bright with the hues of early frost, I feel how beautiful is autumn. But in sere winter, when there are neither verdure or fruit,

I look through the leafless boughs as I could never do before, and see the *stars shine.*"

Stars of our God! beam more brightly into our souls, through this wintry atmosphere. For our home is near. And notwithstanding the Great Philosopher hath said that the old can be happy only through memory, we will be happy through hope also; yea, through that hope which hath no mixture of earth, the "hope that maketh not ashamed, and which is as an anchor to the soul."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A New Existence.

“ Oh soldier of the Cross, away with dreams !
Bright on thy brow, eternal glory streams,
In faith, in love, in wisdom’s steadfast mind,
Arise and leave this moonlight camp behind.”

BISHOP BURGESS.

IF it is wrong to disparage the season of age, which so few reach, over the hidden pit-falls of time, it is unwise to regard only with reluctance and terror, the transition to another life. To depart from this world, is as necessary to the completion of our pilgrimage as to have entered it ; a point of existence not to be evaded, a consummation of what was here begun.

Do we not bear within ourselves, the essen-

tial argument and proof of future existence? Even a heathen shall beautifully answer this question, the clear-minded Xenophon. "When I consider the boundless activity of our minds, the remembrance we have of things past, our foresight of what is to come, when I reflect on the noble discoveries and improvements that those minds have achieved, I am persuaded, and out of all doubt, that a nature which hath in itself such excellent things cannot possibly be mortal."

Is not this brief life so fitted and adjusted to another, as to form but one existence? Like apartments in a well-arranged mansion, they harmonize and are in symmetry. May we not pass from one to the other, with confidence in the Builder and Master of the Mansion? If the passage be dark, is there not a lamp at each extremity, placed there by His hand who "hath conquered Death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel?"

A pious man drawing near his last hour, said to me, "That other world is as clear, and as near, as the entrance into the next room."

Raising his emaciated hand, with a great brightness in his eye, he added, "I had rather enter that next room than to remain longer here, for in that pleasant room are more of my friends than in this."

"*Why are we spared so long?*" is sometimes the half-murmuring question of the aged, for whom the novelties of life are extinguished.

The remark is an implication of unerring wisdom. As long as breath is lent, there will be some duty to perform, some enjoyment to partake, some right word to be spoken, some prayer to be sent upward, some point of Christian example to be made complete. It would be well to bear in our hearts the motto of a poet,

"How well is ours:—how long, permit to Heaven."

Were our fears and anxieties less devoted to the circumstance of leaving this life, than to the danger of failing in those duties on which the welfare of a future one depends, it were better for us now and ever after.

The messenger who is appointed to summon

us to a new existence, is often arrayed with imaginary terrors, and represented as the foe of our race. A quaint writer has recommended that we should "keep on good terms with Death." It would be indeed wise to make him our friend, to speak no ill of him, to be ready for him, and to meet him without fear.

"I am dying," said Washington, when a sharp sickness of twenty-four hours cut off his span of sixty-seven years, "but I am not afraid to die." Sometimes a new and strange courage comes to the Christian with death, though he might "all his lifetime have been subject to bondage." The diffident, who shrank ever from his fellow-man, has been heard to open his mouth boldly, and speak beautiful things of the world to come. To the weak-spirited and oppressed, he appears as a deliverer. Tyranny hath power no more. The fears and hopes that were born in dust, and dwelt there, fade away. The eye that grows dim to these lower skies, kindles with the "glorious liberty of the children of God." As the last breath ebbed away, a saintly woman whispered, with a smile

never to be forgotten. “*God’s happiness!—
God’s happiness!*”

Friends! brethren and sisters, already far advanced on the journey to another life, who

“Nightly pitch the moving tent
A day’s march nearer home,”

are we afraid? Why should we be? Who provided for us, before we entered this state of probation? Whose eye “saw our substance yet being imperfect?” Who took care of us when we knew Him not? Will He forget us now that we are His servants?

Sometimes the faith of the unlearned and simple, reproves those whom the world accounteth wise. A poor Indian woman of great age dwelt on the far banks of the Mississippi. Her people, who always reverence the hoary head, spoke of her as an oracle, and a traveler from one of our Eastern States, was thus led by curiosity to pay her a visit. The way was lonely, and the noon-day sun sultry, ere he reached the spot which had been indicated as her dwelling. Seated alone on a fallen tree, in the shade

of her wigwam, with arms folded, and head drooping upon her bosom, he found the object of his search. Withered were her features, as the dead trunk upon which she rested, and with the taciturnity of her race, she returned his greeting, and replied to his questions only in monosyllables. At length he repeated the interrogatory of Egypt's monarch, to the patriarch—

“How old art thou?”

“I don't know. Some of my people say, one hundred and twenty years. Everybody that I knew when I was young, have been long dead.”

“Are you afraid to die?”

This seemed a talismanic question. Her indifference of manner fled. Light came to her dim eye. Raising its downcast glance, she uttered with an animation that changed her whole aspect, the simplicity and clearness of her faith.

“*Afraid to die? No!* Why should I be afraid? The Great Spirit has been good to me. He has taken care of me all my life. He has kept me from harm through many dangers and troubles. He opens the hearts of the people to be good to me, so that though I am too old and feeble to make provision for my-

self, they let me want for nothing. I know not when He will take me, but wherever it may be, I am willing to go, when he calls."

The brightness faded from her eye as she ceased to speak, and relapsing into her habitual calmness, the aged woman seemed as immovable as the trees that surrounded her. But as the traveler wended his way back through the pathless forest, her words followed him as a strong, strange melody. "Afraid to die? No! Wherever it may be, I am willing to go, when he calls."

To loosen the bonds of affection, and depart from those who are most dear, needs the exercise of an implicit trust. If there are any in that circle, whose helplessness or absorbing love render them apparently dependent on us for protection or happiness, let us endeavor serenely to leave them on the Everlasting Arm.

A statesman, during a disastrous period in the civil wars of England, being appointed to a foreign embassy, was listening to the violent tumult of a stormy sea, the night before his embarkation, and reflecting on the perilous condi-

tion of his native land, until his troubled mind forbade sleep. A confidential servant who accompanied him, perceiving his distress, said,

“Sir, do you not think that God governed the world well, before you came into it?”

“Undoubtedly.”

“Sir, do you not think He will govern it as well, when you are gone out of it?”

“Certainly.”

“Sir, pray excuse me, but do you not think that you may trust Him to govern it quite as well, while you do live?”

The reproof overcame his perturbation, who was about to undertake a tempestuous voyage, burdened with heavy cares. Its spirit might instruct us. For those, whom we contemplate leaving with such anxiety, we might be powerless to protect if we remained behind. The calamities of life would overtake them. Sickness would smite them, and sorrow find a passage to their hearts, and we could not shield them. We could not “deliver our darling from the lion.” We would, therefore, confidently trust them and ourselves to an Almighty Hand, and

filled with holy faith, respond to the words of a powerful writer, "We have nothing to do with death but to defy it, to lift up our heads and look above it. He is but the mere loosener of the cords that moor us to the shores of time, the dissolver of the cement that attaches to the things that perish in the using. What we have to do with it, is to despise it; not to prepare to meet it, but to prepare to meet our God."

Nature might herself instruct us, by the calm aspect with which she meets her own changes.

"How quiet shows the woodland scene!
 Each flower and tree, its duty done,
 Reposing in decay serene,
 Like holy men when age is won,
 Such calm old age, as conscience pure
 And self-commanding hearts ensure,
 Waiting the summons of the sky,
 Content to live and not afraid to die."

Content, and not afraid. That is a blessed Christian motto. Yet we would add still more. Should we not be *happy* to pass into whatever state of existence God shall designate? Look at the bird. It hath gathered neither into store-

house or barn. Its food hath been from the garner of the broad, green earth, and its life a music-strain. The blasts of autumn come. Its empty nest trembles amid the leafless boughs. It must speed its way to another clime.

Does it linger? Does it doubt? Nay, it spreads an unreluctant wing into the trackless ether.

So go thou forth, O Soul! It is God's universe. Thou canst not pass beyond His jurisdiction. His grace is sufficient for thee.

Living, or dying, we would obey the eloquent injunction of the prophet, to "seek Him who maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning." Let us bring our will into conformity with His will, and catch the spirit of the last prayer of Bishop Jewel,

"Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace. Lord, suffer thy servant to come unto Thee. Lord receive my spirit.

"I have not so lived, as to be ashamed of having lived; neither do I fear death, for God

is merciful. Father, Thy will be done. Thy will, I say, and not mine.

“Lo, this is my day. To-day shall I quickly come unto Thee. This day shall I see my Lord Jesus—Thou, O Lord, who hast been my only hope.”

But in what attitude shall we stand, and how shall we occupy ourselves, when the time and strength for active service have past away? The answer is, *Wait*.

The waiting graces are beautiful. They imply readiness. We can not quietly await any great event for which we are unprepared. Let us have oil in our lamps, and cherish every gentle and holy affection.

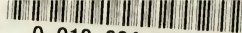
Wait! It is an honorable service. An ancient warrior put on his armor and braced himself upright when the footstep of death stole upon him. “I have never turned my back on any foe, while I lived,” said he, “and I will look the last one in the face.”

Wait bravely, therefore, in Christian armor, the opening of that gate which leads to a higher existence. Wait, with a smile, the ministry of

the last messenger. Ask not when he cometh, or where, or in what manner. Stipulate nothing. Poor pensioner on God's free mercy, question not, distrust not. His time is the best time.

When it shall come may we have grace to let the frail tent of this body calmly fall, and putting our hand into the pierced hand of a Redeemer, with a song of praise go forth to "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."





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